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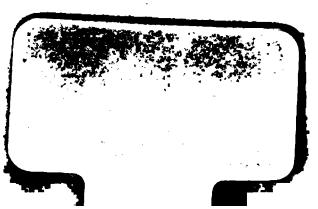

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Praemium
hoc Literarium dedit.
Thomas Jones
Bethesdae Jul. 21.° A.D. 1853.

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED,

A

LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

AND

OBSERVATIONS ON HIS WRITINGS.

NEWARK:
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PREFACE.

THE candid reader will readily perceive, that the following Selection is not, to use a significant phrase, got up in the usual way; but that the Editor has taken some pains in collecting materials for the life of his Author, and that great attention has also been paid to the typography and paper of the present little work. In addition to these, it may not be improper to observe, that due exertions have been made to procure an accurate and elegant likeness of Mr. Cowper; and that Notes are added, for the illustration of such passages in his writings, as might not otherwise be perfectly understood.

May, 1801.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF W. COWPER, Esq.

&c.

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE OF W. COWPER, Esq.

WITH

OBSERVATIONS ON HIS WRITINGS.

PERHAPS it has never before fallen to the lot of the biographer, to contemplate a life so painfully interesting as that of the amiable author of THE TASK.

MR. COWPER was born in 1722, at Berkhamstead in Hertfordshire. His father, a respectable clergyman, and at that time in possession of the living of Berkhamstead, was immediately descended from the lord Chancellor Cowper. But the poet appears to have been particularly attached to his mother, a most excellent woman, of whose tenderness and assiduities he was by death very early deprived; this was a severe shock to the feelings of Cowper, and from which, indeed, he never perfectly recovered.

He was sent to Westminster school, preparatory to that course of study which it was designed he should complete at the university. Here, however, the natural timidity of his temper so much depressed him, that his friends saw the impropriety of attempting to transport him to scenes of augmented turbulence and anxiety;* and they entirely

---

*The reflections which were suggested to the mind of Mr. Cowper by a knowledge of public schools, are thus pointedly expressed in the Tirocinium.—

There shall he learn, ere sixteen winters old,
That authors are most useful pawn'd or sold;
That pedantry is all that schools impart,
But taverns teach the knowledge of the heart:
There waiter Dick, with bacchanalian lays,
Shall win his heart and have his drunken praise,
His counsellor and bosom-friend shall prove;
And some street-pacing harlot his first love.
* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * *
I blame not those who, with what care they can,
O'erwatch the numerous and unruly clan;
Or if I blame, 'tis only that they dare
Promise a work of which they must despair.
* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * *
Ye once were justly fam'd, for bringing forth
Undoubted scholarship and genuine worth;
And in the firmament of fame still shines
A glory, bright as that of all the signs,
Of poets rais'd by you, and statesmen, and divines.
Peace to them all! those brilliant times are fled,
And no such lights are kindling in their stead.
Our striplings shine, indeed, but with such rays
As set the midnight riot in a blaze;
And seem, if judg'd by their expressive looks,
Deeper in none than in their surgeons' books.

relinquished the plan of sending him to Oxford: he was, therefore, entered at the Temple, in order to prosecute those wishes and hopes which were still indulged by his connexions.

By a certain mode of arrangement, the patent place of clerk of the House of Lords had been reserved for Mr. Cowper; and to this appointment he was directed to look forward, as a station highly advantageous to himself, and honourable to his family. He had, while at Westminster, become intimate with Edward Thurlow,* who was afterwards promoted to the Woolsack; and, in addition to this, contracted several attachments with characters whose influence might have greatly accelerated his future advancement in the world. It was, therefore, natural that the hopes of his friends should be elevated to a high degree, nor is it surprising that they should suffer themselves to be blinded to those impediments which were likely to disappoint their expectations. Their delusion was not, however, of long duration. No reasonings, no entreaties, could overcome the aversion of Mr. Cowper, for what he denominated publick life; he even solicited madness, as a relief from the importunities of his friends, who, convinced of the folly of any longer persisting against nature and inclination, at length relinquished their entreaties, and permitted him to retire into that seclusion, the desire of which was the ruling passion of his breast.

* *Vide Mr. Cowper's elegant tribute to Lord Thurlow, p. 243 of the First Volume of his Poems.—Edit.* 1800.

ABOUT this time, Mr. Cowper was first attacked by those religious convictions, which cast so deep a gloom over too many of his succeeding years. While harrassed by these impressions, he received a visit from Mr. Madan,* the celebrated author of Thelypthora, to whom he was related, and who explained to him the nature of christian repentance, regeneration, and faith; but without the desired effect. On

---

* Many circumstances seem to warrant an opinion, that the following beautiful verses, in Mr. Cowper's Poem on Conversation, refer to Mr. Madan.—

Oh, I have seen—nor hope, perhaps, in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again—
A Veteran Warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact, though not precise, though meek, keen-eyed;
A man that would have foil'd at their own play,
A dozen would-be's of the modern day;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright, as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlightened page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear:
Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory was the gospel theme;
There, he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence was there at home,
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he lov'd so well
* * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * *
Though time will wear us, and we must grow old;
Such men are not forgot as soon as cold.—

an excursion to Dr. Cotton's,* at St. Albans, Mr. Cowper was, however, restored to serenity and peace. Soon after, he retired to Huntingdon, where he resided upwards of three years in the strictest friendship with the Rev. Mr. Unwin,† to whom he has addressed the Tirocinium. The death of Mr. Unwin inducing him again to change his residence, he removed to Olney, accompanied by that gentleman's widow.

At Olney, he became acquainted with the Rev. Mr. Newton,‡

---

* *Perhaps, a grave physician, gathering fees,*
Punctually paid for length'ning out disease;
No Cotton, *whose humanity sheds rays*
That make superior skill his second praise.
V. 1, *p.* 118.

† *Not rich, I render what I may—*
I seize thy name in haste,
And place it in this first essay,
Lest this should prove the last.
Tis where it should be—in a plan
That holds in view the good of man.
Cowper to Mr. Unwin. V. 1, *p.* 294.

‡ *Old winter, halting o'er the mead,*
Bids me and Mary mourn;
But lovely spring peeps o'er his head,
And wispers YOUR *return.*
Then April, with her sister May,
Shall chase him from the bow'rs,
And weave fresh garlands, every day,
To crown the smiling hours.
And if a tear, that speaks regret
Of happier times, appear,
A glimpse of joy, that WE *have met,*
Shall shine and dry the tear.
Invitation to Mr. Newton,
into the Country. V. 1, *p.* 281.

who has commemorated the commencement of this intimacy, in the Preface to the First Volume of COWPER'S POEMS.—"By these steps," says Mr. Newton, "the good hand of God, unknown to me, was providing for me one of the principal blessings of my life; a friend and a counsellor, in whose company, for almost seven years, though we were seldom seven successive waking hours separate, I always found new pleasure. A friend, who was not only a comfort to myself, but a blessing to the affectionate poor people among whom I then lived." The poems were published in 1787, and were ushered into the world by an advertisement from the pen of Mr. Newton; in which we are informed, that Mr. Cowper was again enabled to resume his pen, and that some of the first fruits of his recovery were then presented to the publick. With all the anxiety of friendship, had this gentleman attended the indisposition of the poet; and now, with becoming exultation, he hailed his returning health. Some persons have not hesitated to observe, that Mr. Newton's theology was calculated rather to irritate, than allay, the apprehensions of Mr. Cowper: but these, surely, were ignorant of Mr. Newton's tenets, or they never could have ascribed so lamentable a tendency to the sentiments of the author of the following declaration.—"The outward circumstances of many have been uniform; they have known but little variety in life; and, with respect to their inward change, it has been effected in a secret way, unnoticed by others and almost unperceived by themselves. Others, the Lord seems to select, in order to shew the exceeding riches of his grace, and the greatness of his mighty power, &c. We must not, therefore,

make the experience of others, in all respects, a rule to ourselves nor our own a rule to others."* It really seems highly improbable, that he who reasoned so well upon what is considered by christians to be a difficult subject, should mislead the mind of his friend, and consign him to religious melancholy. Notwithstanding, however, the utmost vigilance of affection, Mr. Cowper was again plunged into that dreadful abyss, again tortured with doubt, apprehension, and dismay.

The violence of the disorder subsiding, he became, as formerly, accessible to a few intimate friends, who successively endeavoured, by alluring him into the paths of the muses, to divert his thoughts from their habitual gloom. Thus originated most of those poems, which have surprised and delighted the world, and which awhile relieved even the painful solitude of despair. His mode of living, at this time, whenever peace indulged him with her smiles, is thus described: "The forenoon being employed in composition became gradually less distressing. Before dinner, he usually walked two hours; and the air, the rural prospects, and muscular exercise, contributed to his further relief. If at dinner, and, during the afternoon, he had the company of an intimate friend or two, their conversation seemed to afford the principal alleviation to his habitual burthen. The evening was commonly employed in reading aloud to some friend who resided with him. But as night approached, his gloom

* *An Authentic Narrative, &c. Edit.* 1799, *pp.* 4—86, 7. *Johnson.*

of mind regularly increased; and when he went to his bed, it was not to rest, but to be again harrassed in slumber, with the terrifying images of a bewildered fancy, neither restrained by the controul of reason, nor diverted by external objects.* Unhappily, even this state of comparative bliss was but too suddenly deranged, by a relapse into that dreadful despondency which was peculiarly incident to this excellent man! he, indeed, so far regained himself as to be able to assume his pen, and in some measure to relieve the anxieties of thought with the soothing graces of imagination; but he was never perfectly reinstated in the felicity from which he had fallen.

MR. COWPER was laterly under the care of his affectionate and intelligent young relative, the Rev. John Johnson, who, during the last year or two of his life, had sometimes indulged the hope of witnessing his complete restoration to health. Suddenly however, this expectation was fatally disappointed; and, towards the close of 1799, it became sufficiently evident that he could not successfully contend with the ravages of a rapid decay, that, ere long, the mortal must put on immortality. Conscious of the speedy approach of this important change, however agonizing to himself, Mr. Johnson unremittingly exercised that attention which Young so truly describes as—

——The dreadful post of observation,
Darker every hour.

* *Greatheed's Sermon, on the Death of Mr. Cowper, pp. 22—3.*

On the 25th of April 1800, friendship was at length discharged from these afflicting duties, and its object happily released from this scene of suffering and sorrow. Early on the morning of that day, Mr. Cowper sunk into a state of such apparent insensibility, that, had not his eyes remained half open, it might have been conjectured a tranquil slumber. In this situation—his respiration regular, though feeble; his countenance and frame perfectly serene,—he continued about twelve hours, when he expired without heaving his breath. He died at East Dereham in Norfolk; and his death has occasioned two funeral discourses. One of these was preached by the Rev. Mr. Newton, on Sunday May the 11th 1800, at St. Mary Woolnoth church in Lombard Street, London; the other, on the 18th of May 1800, was delivered by Mr. Greatheed at Olney.

Nothing in the moral character of Mr. Cowper can explain the cause of his habitual despondency. So far from his being tainted with early vice, so far from rushing into those excesses which are considered inseparable from youth, having been religiously educated, he maintained an uniform reverence for religion; his manners were always respectable and amiable; where he was best known, there he was most beloved. He was bewildered in the mazes of speculation; he could not rest till he had ascertained the certainty of his election to the blessings of the gospel, and upon this rock he appears to have been wrecked. Endued with the acutest sensibility, he was but too apt to reason from his feelings, instead of attempting to regulate those feeling by the more salutary

decisions of reason. After all, it is certainly strange, that a man, evidently possessing an uncommon portion of humour, whose writings are frequently interspersed with sallies of true wit, and who was in some respects constitutionally cheerful, should become the prey of so morbid and malignant a species of melancholy.—

Sure 'tis a curse which angry fates impose,
To mortify man's arrogance, that those
Who're fashion'd of some better sort of clay
Much sooner than the common herd decay.
What bitter pangs must humbled Genius feel,
In their last hours to view a Swift and Steel!
How must ill-boding horrors fill her breast,
When she beholds men mark'd above the rest
For qualities most dear, plung'd from that height;
And sunk, deep sunk, in second childhood's night.
Are men, indeed, such things? and are the best
More subject to this evil than the rest,—
To drivel out whole years of idiot breath,
And sit the monuments of living death?
O! galling circumstance to human pride!
Abasing thought! but not to be denied.
With curious art, the brain, too finely wrought,
Preys on herself, and is destroy'd by thought.

CHURCHILL.

THE following passages present to the reader a description of Mr. Cowper, at once faithful, interesting, and animated.

If ever thou hast felt another's pain,
If ever when he sigh'd hast sigh'd again,
If ever on thine eye-lid stood the tear
That pity had engender'd, drop one here!
This man was happy—had the world's good-word,
And with it ev'ry joy it can afford;

Friendship and love seem'd tenderly at strife,
Which most should sweeten his untroubled life;
Politely learn'd, and of a gentle race,
Good-breeding and good sense gave all a grace,
And, whether at the toilette of the fair
He laugh'd and trifled, made him welcome there,
Or, if in masculine debate he shar'd,
Ensur'd him mute attention and regard.
Alas, how chang'd!—Expressive of his mind,
His eyes are sunk, arms folded, head reclin'd;
Those awful syllables, hell, death, and sin,
Though whisper'd, plainly tell what works within;
That conscience there performs her proper part,
And writes a doomsday sentence on his heart!
Forsaking, and forsaken of all friends,
He now perceives where earthly pleasure ends;
Hard task, for one who lately knew no care,
And harder still, as learnt beneath despair!
His hours no longer pass unmark'd away,
A dark importance saddens every day;
He hears the notice of the clock, perplex'd,
And cries—perhaps eternity strikes next!
Sweet music is no longer music here,
And laughter sounds like madness in his ear:
His grief the world of all her pow'r disarms;
Wine has no taste, and beauty has no charms:
God's holy word, once trivial in his view,
Now by the voice of his experience true,
Seems, as it is, the fountain whence alone
Must spring that hope he pants to make his own.

HOPE—*V.* 1, *pp.* 136 *to* 8.

I was a striken deer, that left the herd
Long since; with many an arrow deep infixt,
My panting side was charg'd, when I withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant shades.
There was I found by one, who had himself
Been hurt by th' archers. In his side he bore,

And in his hands and feet, the cruel scars
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and heal'd and bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in remote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled scene;
With few associates, and not wishing more.
Here much I ruminate, as much I may,
With other views of men and manners now
Than once, and others of a life to come.

* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * *

———Slighted as it is, and by the great
Abandon'd, and, which still I more regret,
Infected with the manners and the modes
It knew not once, the country wins me still.
I never fram'd a wish, or form'd a plan,
That flatter'd me with hopes of earthly bliss,
But there I laid the scene. There early stray'd
My fancy, ere yet liberty of choice
Had found me, or the hope of being free.
My very dreams were rural; rural, too,
The first-born efforts of my youthful muse,
Sportive, and jingling her poetic bells
Ere yet her ear was mistress of her pow'rs.
No bard could please me but whose lyre was tun'd
To Nature's praises. Heroes and their feats
Fatigued me, never weary of the pipe
Of Tityrus, assembling, as he sang,
The rustic throng beneath his fav'rite beech.

* * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * * * * *

Hail, therefore, patroness of health, and ease,
And contemplation, heart consoling joys
And harmless pleasures, in the throng'd abode
Of multitudes unknown; hail, rural life!
Address himself who will to the pursuit
Of honours, or emoluments, or fame;
I shall not add myself to such a chace,

Thwart his attempts, or envy his success.
Some must be great. Great offices will have
Great talents. And God gives to ev'ry man
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
That lifts him into life; and lets him fall
Just in the niche he was ordain'd to fill.
To the deliv'rer of an injur'd land
He gives a tongue t' enlarge upon, an heart
To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs;
To monarchs dignity; to judges sense;
To artists ingenuity and skill;
To me an unambitious mind, content
In the low vale of life, that early felt
A wish for ease and leisure, and ere long
Found here that leisure, and that ease I wish'd.

THE TASK—*V.* 2, *pp.* 75, 6: 138, 9.

SUCH is the portrait which the poet has delineated of himself: it is the production of a master, who had neither the wish nor the intention of presenting to the world a false resemblance; it is, therefore, susceptible of few additions, and, perhaps, cannot be improved. If, however, we allow the truth of the observation,—that only those who have been the subjects of Love, are capable of describing its sensations, with sensibility and justice; Cowper, so far from having lived indifferent to that passion, has, in the following passage, given ample occasion for us to imagine that he was himself the victim of a deep and hopeless attachment:—

The lover too shuns business and alarms,
Tender idolater of absent charms.
Saints offer nothing in their warmest pray'rs,
That he devotes not with a zeal like their's;
'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,
And ev'ry thought that wanders, is a crime.

In sighs he worships his supremely fair,
And weeps a sad libation in despair,
Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,
Wins in return an answer of disdain.

RETIREMENT—*V.* 1, *pp.* 210, 11.

I SHALL close these remarks, on the Life of Mr. Cowper, with the following modest and characteristic epitome, drawn by himself, in a letter to a literary friend, dated March the 10th 1792.—"You are in danger, I perceive," says Mr. Cowper, "of thinking of me more highly than you ought to think. I am not one of the Literati, among whom you seem disposed to place me,—far from it. I told you how heinously I am unprovided with the means of being so, having long since sent all my books to market. My learning accordingly lies in a very narrow compass. It is school-boy learning somewhat improved, and very little more. From the age of 20 to 33, I was occupied, or ought to have been, in the study of the law. From 33 to 60 I have spent my time in the country, where my reading has been only an apology for idleness, and where, when I had not either a magazine or a review in my hand, I was sometimes a carpenter, at others, a bird-cage maker, or a gardener, or a drawer of landscapes. At 50 years of age I commenced an author. It is a whim that has served me longest and best, and which will probably be my last. Thus you see I have had very little opportunity to become what is properly called—Learned. In truth, having given myself so entirely of late to poetry, I am not sorry for this deficiency; since great

learning, I have been sometimes inclined to suspect, is rather a hindrance to the Fancy than a furtherance."

—

THE Writings of Cowper are not, indeed, voluminous; but they are such as have secured to their author no mean rank among the standard poets of his country,—an elevation not at this day attainable, without sound and prominent excellence.

SOME persons have affirmed the rhyme of Cowper to be deficient in melody, and frequently prosaic. There are, it is owned, many incidental defects in the works of this author; but there is a wide distinction between that which is common and adventitious, and that which we consider as radical or constituent. Cowper is certainly negligent, to a degree highly censurable; and he is sometimes betrayed into a species of flatness destructive of the general interest of the piece. He has lines such as—

Like a proud swan conv'ring the stream by force—
Faults in the life breed errors in the brain;
And these reciprocally those again—
Hark! universal nature shook and groan'd—

and others, perhaps still more unpardonable; but these, which may be called vices common to genius, and from which no human composition is exempt, are richly compensated by

the most polished and interesting effusions of poetry. Witness, his apostrophe to Liberty, his description of Music, the concluding lines of the Expostulation, his address to Greenland, the poem entitled the Shrubbery, and, above all, the verses on receiving his Mother's picture.

His descriptions are often new, always striking. Among these, the following possesses great merit. Speaking of man, he observes

His passions, like the wat'ry stores that sleep
Beneath the smiling surface of the deep,
Wait but the lashes of a wintry storm,
To frown and roar, and shake his feeble form.

The description of Discipline, in the second book of 'The Task,' is not to be excelled.

His sentiment, also, is often as peculiar as his description. Indeed, I know not any thing of this kind more delicately touching than the turtle's address to her mate, in the tale of The Doves :

When lightnings flash among the trees,
Or kites are hov'ring near,
I fear lest thee alone they seize,
And know no other fear.

'Tis then I feel myself a wife,
And press thy wedded side,
Resolv'd an union formed for life
Death never shall divide.

Beloved! if fable and romance,
(Forgive a transient thought)
Thou could'st become unkind at last,
And leave thy parent fast,

No need of lightnings from on high,
Or kites with cruel beak;
Denied th' endearments of thine eye,
This widow'd heart would break.

WHAT a lively and affecting sensibility is displayed in the following reflection, when, on recollecting a beloved mother, and combining with her the remembrance of local scenes, the poet exclaims—

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor.—

THE thought in the last line seems perfectly original. Not less valuable, though of a different tendency, is the following reproval of atheism:

Such microscopic proof of skill and power,
As, hid from ages past, God now displays
To combat atheists with in modern days.

THE satire of Cowper, though in general playful, and undirected to particular persons, takes, now and then, a keener bent. For example, what he has said of the Jewish women, is plainly levelled at females of a more recent age.—

Her women, insolent and self-caress'd,
By vanity's unwearied finger drest,
Forgot the blush that virgin fears impart
To modest cheeks, and borrowed one from art;

Were just such trifles, without worth or use,
As silly pride and idleness produce;
They stretch'd the neck, and rolled the wanton eye,
And sigh'd for every fool that flutter'd by.

But, The Task is Cowper's great work; it is here that he has exerted his best powers, here that he has expanded and confirmed his leading opinions. There is, however, something too ludicrous, at the commencement of this admired poem, in the following passage,

As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth,
Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile:
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock
Wash'd by the sea, or on the grav'lly bank
Thrown up by wintry torrents roaring loud,
Fearless of wrong, repos'd his weary strength.

Should any one contend, that the introduction to 'The Task,' being a species of mock-heroic, may so far countenance the foregoing verses; he will, perhaps, find it difficult to assign a reason, why this digression, which the occasion did not naturally demand, and which really degrades so valuable a poem, was at all admitted. There could be no necessity for remarking that the Picts sat unbreech'd on the ground, in order to convince us that their descendants were afterwards indulged with chairs and sofas.

It might be considered unnecessary to particularize the numerous beauties of this favourite production; a production which displays so much goodness and piety of heart, so much strength and elevation of thought, such dignified satire, such uncommon wit, so sublime and creative an imagination,

as fully justify the success with which it has been crowned. But, what has often imparted delight, will not shrink from the test of investigation; nor is it one of our most reprehensible wishes, that we are anxious to become more intimately acquainted with that which has once administered to our satisfaction. These observations apply with as much propriety to books as to men; and to no writings, with more justice, than to those of the present Author. She must have dull nerves, who shall peruse, unmoved, these pointed strictures on Cards:

The paralytic, who can hold her cards,
But cannot play them, borrows a friend's hand
To deal and shuffle, to divide and sort,
Her mingled suits and sequences; and sits,
Spectatress both and spectacle, a sad
And silent cypher, while her proxy plays.
Others are dragg'd into the crowded room
Between supporters; and, once seated, sit,
Through downright inability to rise,
Till the stout bearers lift the corpse again.

The poet has revived the state of morals and manners with salutary severity. Who that possesses a heart capable of feeling, and a head calculated for reflection, but must admit the truth of the following lines?—They afford us an example of great satiric powers, directed to the noblest purposes.

——————Mansions once
Knew their own masters; and laborious hinds,
Who had surviv'd the father, serv'd the son.
Now the legitimate and rightful lord
Is but a transient guest, newly arriv'd,

Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These vallies and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
Or smil'd when a sabbath appear'd.

IT were needless to detail the 'Diverting History of John Gilpin,' which displays such original wit as might alone have immortalized the author.

MR. COWPER translated the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer into English blank-verse. As this was professedly a close version of the original, it received but little encouragement; and was utterly neglected by those who were accustomed to the glittering periods of Pope. He, however, who is incapable of consulting the Greek, will find it a valuable acquisition.

THE style of Cowper's rhyme is conversational, as in the 'Table Talk,' with which he opened his poetical career, and of which he never lost sight through the whole of his first volume. His blank-verse is truly original, and is in many instances highly dramatic; exhibiting a structure of versification admirably calculated for the theatre. As to what are considered plagiarisms, the pages of this poet contain numerous passages of that description. Generally, however, so far from his incurring the guilt of *Gypseyism*,—stealing and then deforming what had been stolen,—he improves those

images or thoughts which, it is conjectured, he had borrowed, perhaps unconsciously, from others.

THE writer of this article, has already traced a number of Mr. Cowper's imitations; he may be hereafter induced to pursue this investigation, and submit the result of his inquiry to the public.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

RELIGIOUS, MORAL, AND DIDACTIC.

PART I.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

PART I.

PIETY.

ARTIST, attend! your brushes and your paint—
Produce them—take a chair—now draw a saint.
O, sorrowful and sad! the streaming tears
Channel her cheeks—a Niobe appears!
Is this a saint? Throw tints and all away—
True piety is cheerful as the day;
Will weep, indeed, and heave a pitying groan,
For others' woes, but smiles upon her own.

NATIONAL

EXPOSTULATION.

STAND now, and judge thyself.—Hast thou incurr'd
His anger, who can waste thee with a word,
Who poises and proportions sea and land,
Weighing them in the hollow of his hand,
And in whose awful sight all nations seem
As grasshoppers, as dust, a drop, a dream?
Hast thou (a sacrilege his soul abhors)
Claim'd all the glory of thy prosp'rous wars?
Proud of thy fleets and armies, stol'n the gem
Of his just praise, to lavish it on them?
Hast thou not learn'd, what thou art often told,
A truth still sacred, and believ'd of old,
That no success attends on spears and swords
Unblest, and that the battle is the Lord's?
That courage is his creature, and dismay
The post that at his bidding speeds away,
Ghastly in feature, and his stamm'ring tongue
With doleful humour and sad presage hung,

To quell the valour of the stoutest heart,
And teach the combatant a woman's part?
That he bids thousands fly when none pursue,
Saves as he will, by many or by few,
And claims for ever, as his royal right,
Th' event and sure decision of the fight?
Hast thou, though suckled at fair freedom's breast,
Exported slav'ry to the conquer'd East,
Pull'd down the tyrants India serv'd with dread,
And rais'd thyself, a greater, in their stead?
Gone thither arm'd and hungry, return'd full,
Fed from the richest veins of the Mogul,
A despot big with pow'r obtain'd by wealth,
And that obtain'd by rapine and by stealth?
With Asiatic vices stor'd thy mind,
But left their virtues and thine own behind;
And, having truck'd thy soul, brought home the fee,
To tempt the poor to sell himself to thee?
Hast thou by statute mov'd from its design
The Saviour's feast, his own blest bread and wine,
And made the symbols of atoning grace,
An office-key, a pick-lock to a place,
That infidels may make their title good
By an oath dipp'd in sacramental blood?

A blot that will be still a blot, in spite
Of all that grave apologists may write;
And, though a bishop toil to cleanse the stain,
He wipes and scours the silver cup in vain.
And hast thou sworn, on ev'ry slight pretence,
Till perjuries are common as bad pence,
While thousands, careless of the damning sin,
Kiss the book's outside who ne'er look'd within?
Hast thou, when heav'n has cloth'd thee with disgrace,
And, long provok'd, repaid thee to thy face,
(For thou hast known eclipses, and endur'd
Dimness and anguish, all thy beams obscur'd,
When sin has shed dishonour on thy brow;
And never of a sabler hue than now)
Hast thou, with heart perverse and conscience scar'd,
Despising all rebuke, still persever'd,
And, having chosen evil, scorn'd the voice
That cried, Repent!—and gloried in thy choice?
Thy fastings, when calamity at last
Suggests th' expedient of a yearly fast,
What mean they? Canst thou dream there is a pow'r
In lighter diet, at a later hour,

To charm to sleep the threat'ning of the skies,
And hide past folly from all-seeing eyes?
The fast that wins deliv'rance, and suspends
The stroke that a vindictive God intends,
Is to renounce hypocrisy; to draw
Thy life upon the pattern of the law;
To war with pleasure, idoliz'd before;
To vanquish lust, and wear its yoke no more.
All fasting else, whate'er be the pretence,
Is wooing mercy by renew'd offence.

Hast thou within thee sin, that in old time
Brought fire from heav'n, the sex-abusing crime,
Whose horrid perpetration stamps disgrace
Baboons are free from upon human race?
Think on the fruitful and well water'd spot
That fed the flocks and herds of wealthy Lot,
Where Paradise seem'd still vouchsaf'd on earth,
Burning and scorch'd into perpetual dearth,
Or, in his words who damn'd the base desire,
Suff'ring the vengeance of eternal fire:
Then nature, injur'd, scandaliz'd, defil'd,
Unveil'd her blushing cheek, look'd on, and smil'd;
Beheld with joy the lovely scene defac'd,
And prais'd the wrath that laid her beauties waste.

Far be the thought from any verse of mine,
And farther still the form'd and fix'd design,
To thrust the charge of deeds that I detest
Against an innocent unconscious breast:
The man that dares traduce, because he can
With safety to himself, is not a man:
An individual is a sacred mark,
Not to be pierc'd in play, or in the dark;
But public censure speaks a public foe,
Unless a zeal for virtue guides the blow.
The priestly brotherhood, devout, sincere,
From mean self-int'rest and ambition clear,
Their hope in Heav'n, servility their scorn,
Prompt to persuade, expostulate, and warn,
Their wisdom pure, and giv'n them from above,
Their usefulness ensur'd by zeal and love,
As meek as the man Moses, and withal
As bold as in Agrippa's presence Paul,
Should fly the world's contaminating touch,
Holy and unpolluted:—are thine such?
Except a few with Eli's spirit blest,
Hophni and Phineas may describe the rest.
Where shall a teacher look, in days like these,
For ears and hearts that he can hope to please?

Look to the poor—the simple and the plain
Will hear, perhaps, thy salutary strain:
Humility is gentle, apt to learn,
Speak but the word, will listen and return.
Alas, not so! the poorest of the flock
Are proud, and set their faces as a rock;
Denied that earthly opulence they choose,
God's better gift they scoff at, and refuse.
The rich, the produce of a nobler stem,
Are more intelligent, at least—try them.
Oh, vain inquiry! they, without remorse,
Are altogether gone a devious course;
Where beck'ning pleasure leads them, wildly stray;
Have burst the bands, and cast the yoke away:
How shall a verse impress thee? by what name
Shall I adjure thee not to court thy shame?
By their's whose bright example, unimpeach'd,
Directs thee to that eminence they reach'd—
Heroes and worthies of days past, thy sires?
Or his, who touch'd their hearts with hallow'd fires?
Their names, alas! in vain reproach an age,
Whom all the vanities they scorn'd engage;
And his, that seraphs tremble at, is hung
Disgracefully on ev'ry trifler's tongue,

Or serves the champion in forensic war
To flourish and parade with at the bar.
A world is up in arms, and thou, a spot
Not quickly found if negligently sought,
Thy soul as ample as thy bounds are small,
Endur'st the brunt, and dar'st defy them all:
And wilt thou join to this bold enterprize
A bolder still, a contest with the skies?
Remember, if he guard thee and secure,
Whoe'er assails thee, thy success is sure;
But, if he leave thee, though the skill and pow'r
Of nations, sworn to spoil thee and devour,
Were all collected in thy single arm,
And thou couldst laugh away the fear of harm,
That strength would fail, oppos'd against the push
And feeble onset af a pigmy rush.
Say not (and, if the thought of such defence
Should spring within thy bosom, drive it thence)
What nation amongst all my foes is free
From crimes as base as any charg'd on me;
Their measure fill'd, they too shall pay the debt
Which God, though long forborn, will not forget.
But know that wrath divine, when most severe,
Makes justice still the guide of his career,

And will not punish, in one mingled crowd,
Them without light, and thee without a cloud.
Muse, hang this harp upon yon aged beech,
Still murm'ring with the solemn truths I teach;
And, while, at intervals, a cold blast sings
Through the dry leaves, and pants upon the strings,
My soul shall sigh in secret, and lament
A nation scourg'd, yet tardy to repent.
I know the warning song is sung in vain;
That few will hear, and fewer heed the strain;
But, if a sweeter voice, and one design'd
A blessing to my country and mankind,
Reclaim the wand'ring thousands, and bring home
A flock, so scatter'd and so wont to roam,
Then place it once again between my knees;
The sound of truth will then be sure to please:
And truth alone, where'er my life be cast,
In scenes of plenty or the pining waste,
Shall be my chosen theme, my glory to the last.

THE PULPIT,

THE BEST ADVOCATE OF VIRTUE.

THE pulpit, therefore (and I name it fill'd
With solemn awe, that bids me well beware
With what intent I touch that holy thing)—
The pulpit (when the sat'rist has at last,
Strutting and vap'ring in an empty school,
Spent all his force and made no proselyte)—
I say the pulpit (in the sober use
Of its legitimate, peculiar pow'rs)
Must stand acknowledg'd, while the world shall stand,
The most important and effectual guard,
Support, and ornament, of virtue's cause.
There stands the messenger of truth: there stands
The legate of the skies!—His theme divine,
His office sacred, his credentials clear.
By him the violated law speaks out
Its thunders: and by him, in strains as sweet
As angels use, the gospel whispers peace.
He stablishes the strong, restores the weak,

Reclaims the wand'rer, binds the broken heart,
And, arm'd himself in panoply complete
Of heav'nly temper, furnishes with arms,
Bright as his own, and trains, by ev'ry rule
Of holy discipline, to glorious war,
The sacramental host of God's elect!
Are all such teachers?—would to heav'n all were!
But hark—the doctor's voice!—fast wedg'd between
Two empirics he stands, and with swoln cheeks
Inspires the news, his trumpet. Keener far
Than all invective is his bold harangue,
While through that public organ of report
He hails the clergy; and, defying shame,
Announces to the world his own and their's!
He teaches those to read, whom schools dismiss'd,
And colleges, untaught; sells accent, tone,
And emphasis in score, and gives to pray'r
Th' *adagio* and *andante* it demands.
He grinds divinity of other days
Down into modern use; transforms old print
To zig-zag manuscript, and cheats the eyes
Of gall'ry critics by a thousand arts.
Are there who purchase of the doctor's ware?
Oh, name it not in Guth!—it cannot be,

That grave and learned clerks should need such aid.
He doubtless is in sport, and does but droll,
Assuming thus a rank unknown before—
Grand caterer and dry-nurse of the church!

I venerate the man whose heart is warm,
Whose hands are pure, whose doctrine and whose life,
Coincident, exhibit lucid proof
That he is honest in the sacred cause.
To such I render more than mere respect,
Whose actions say that they respect themselves.
But, loose in morals, and in manners vain,
In conversation frivolous, in dress
Extreme, at once rapacious and profuse;
Frequent in park with lady at his side,
Ambling and prattling scandal as he goes;
But rare at home, and never at his books,
Or with his pen, save when he scrawls a card;
Constant at routs, familiar with a round
Of ladyships—a stranger to the poor;
Ambitious of preferment for its gold,
And well-prepar'd, by ignorance and sloth,
By infidelity and love of world,
To make God's work a sinecure; a slave

To his own pleasures and his patron's pride:
From such apostles, oh, ye mitred heads,
Preserve the church! and lay not careless hands
On sculls that cannot teach, and will not learn.

Would I describe a preacher, such as Paul,
Were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own—
Paul should himself direct me. I would trace
His master-strokes, and draw from his design.
I would express him simple, grave, sincere;
In doctrine uncorrupt; in language plain,
And plain in manner; decent, solemn, chaste,
And natural in gesture; much impress'd
Himself, as conscious of his awful charge,
And anxious mainly that the flock he feeds
May feel it too; affectionate in look,
And tender in address, as well becomes
A messenger of grace to guilty men.
Behold the picture!—Is it like?—Like whom?
The things that mount the rostrum with a skip,
And then skip down again; pronounce a text;
Cry—hem; and reading what they never wrote,
Just fifteen minutes, huddle up their work,
And with a well-bred whisper close the scene!

In man or woman, but far most in man,
And most of all in man that ministers
And serves the altar, in my soul I loath
All affectation, 'Tis my perfect scorn;
Object of my implacable disgust.
What!—will a man play tricks, will he indulge
A silly fond conceit of his fair form,
And just proportion, fashionable mien,
And pretty face, in presence of his God?
Or will he seek to dazzle me with tropes,
As with the di'mond on his lily hand,
And play his brilliant parts before my eyes,
When I am hungry for the bread of life?
He mocks his Maker, prostitutes and shames
His noble office, and, instead of truth,
Displaying his own beauty, starves his flock!
Therefore avaunt all attitude, and stare,
And start theatric, practised at the glass!
I seek divine simplicity in him
Who handles things divine; and all besides,
Though learn'd with labour, and though much admir'd
By curious eyes and judgments ill-inform'd,
To me is odious as the nasal twang

Heard at conventicle, where worthy men,
Misled by custom, strain celestial themes
Through the prest nostril, spectacle-bestrid.
Some, decent in demeanour while they preach,
That task perform'd, relapse into themselves;
And, having spoken wisely, at the close
Grow wanton, and give proof to ev'ry eye—
Whoe'er was edified, themselves were not!
Forth comes the pocket mirror.—First we stroke
An eye-brow; next, compose a straggling lock;
Then with an air, most gracefully perform'd,
Fall back into our seat, extend an arm,
And lay it at its ease with gentle care,
With handkerchief in hand depending low:
The better hand, more busy, gives the nose
Its bergamot, or aids th' indebted eye
With op'ra glass, to watch the moving scene,
And recognize the slow-retiring fair.—
Now this is fulsome, and offends me more
Than in a churchman slovenly neglect
And rustic coarseness would. An heav'nly mind
May be indiff'rent to her house of clay,
And slight the hovel as beneath her care;
But how a body so fantastic, trim,

And quaint, in its deportment and attire,
Can lodge an heav'nly mind—demands a doubt.

He that negociates between God and man,
As God's ambassador, the grand concerns
Of judgment and of mercy, should beware
Of lightness in his speech. 'Tis pitiful
To court a grin, when you should woo a soul;
To break a jest, when pity would inspire
Pathetic exhortation; and t' address
The skittish fancy with facetious tales,
When sent with God's commission to the heart!
So did not Paul. Direct me to a quip
Or merry turn in all he ever wrote,
And I consent you take it for your text,
Your only one, till sides and benches fail.

THE

REGULAR OPERATIONS OF NATURE

MIRACULOUS.

WHAT prodigies can pow'r divine perform
More grand than it produces year by year,
And all in sight of inattentive man?
Familiar with th' effect we slight the cause,
And, in the constancy of nature's course,
The regular return of genial months,
And renovation of a faded world,
See nought to wonder at. Should God again,
As once in Gibeon, interrupt the race
Of the undeviating and punctual sun,
How would the world admire! but speaks it less
An agency divine, to make him know
His moment when to sink and when to rise,
Age after age, than to arrest his course?
All we behold his miracle; but, seen
So duly, all is miracle in vain.

Some say that, in the origin of things,
When all creation started into birth,
The infant elements receiv'd a law,
From which they swerve not since. That under force
Of that controuling ordinance they move,
And need not his immediate hand, who first
Prescrib'd their course, to regulate it now.
Thus dream they, and contrive to save a God
Th' incumbrance of his own concerns, and spare
The great Artificer of all that moves,
The stress of a continual act, the pain
Of unremitted viligence and care,
As too laborious and severe a task.
So man, the moth, is not afraid, it seems,
To span omnipotence, and measure might,
That knows no measure, by the scanty rule
And standard of his own, that is to-day,
And is not ere to-morrow's sun go down!
But how should matter occupy a charge
Dull as it is, and satisfy a law
So vast in its demands, unless impell'd
To ceaseless service by a ceaseless force,
And under pressure of some conscious cause?
The Lord of all, himself through all diffus'd,

Sustains, and is the life of all that lives.
Nature is but a name for an effect,
Whose cause is God. He feeds the secret fire
By which the mighty process is maintain'd,
Who sleeps not, is not weary; in whose sight
Slow-circling ages are as transient days;
Whose work is without labour; whose designs
No flaw deforms, no difficulty thwarts;
And whose benificence no charge exhausts.
Him blind antiquity profan'd, not serv'd,
With self-taught rites, and under various names,
Female and male, Pomona, Pales, Pan,
And Flora, and Vertumnus; peopling earth
With tutelary goddesses and gods
That were not; and commending, as they would,
To each some province, garden, field, or grove.
But all are under one. One spirit—His
Who wore the platted thorns with bleeding brows—
Rules universal nature. Not a flow'r
But shows some touch, in freckle, streak, or stain,
Of his unrivall'd pencil. He inspires
Their balmy odours, and imparts their hues,
And bathes their eyes with nectar, and includes,
In grains as countless as the sea-side sands,

The forms with which he sprinkles all the earth.
Happy who walks with him! whom what he finds
Of flavour or of scent in fruit or flow'r,
Or what he views of beautiful or grand
In nature, from the broad majestic oak
To the green blade that twinkles in the sun,
Prompts with remembrance of a present God!
His presence, who made all so fair, perceiv'd,
Makes all still fairer. As with him no scene
Is dreary, so with him all seasons please.

He is the happy man, whose life ev'n now
Shows somewhat of that happier life to come;
Who, doom'd to an obscure but tranquil state,
Is pleas'd with it, and, were he free to choose,
Would make his fate his choice; whom peace, the fruit
Of virtue, and whom virtue, fruit of faith,
Prepare for happiness; bespeak him one
Content indeed to sojourn while he must
Below the skies, but having there his home.
The world o'erlooks him in her busy search
Of objects, more illustrious in her view;
And, occupied as earnestly as she,

Though more sublimely, he o'erlooks the world.
She scorns his pleasures, for she knows them not;
He seeks not her's, for he has prov'd them vain.
He cannot skim the ground like summer birds
Pursuing gilded flies; and such he deems
Her honours, her emoluments, her joys.
Therefore in contemplation is his bliss,
Whose pow'r is such, that whom she lifts from earth
She makes familiar with a heav'n unseen,
And shows him glories yet to be reveal'd.
Not slothful he, though seeming unemploy'd,
And censur'd oft as useless. Stillest streams
Oft water fairest meadows, and the bird
That flutters least is longest on the wing.
Ask him, indeed, what trophies he has rais'd,
Or what achievements of immortal fame
He purposes, and he shall answer—None.
His warfare is within. There unfatigu'd
His fervent spirit labours. There he fights,
And there obtains fresh triumphs o'er himself,
And never with'ring wreaths, compar'd with which
The laurels that a Cæsar reaps are weeds.
Perhaps the self-approving haughty world,
That as she sweeps him with her whistling silks,

Scarce deigns to notice him, or, if she see,
Deems him a cypher in the works of God,
Receives advantage from his noiseless hours,
Of which she little dreams. Perhaps she owes
Her sunshine and her rain, her blooming spring
And plenteous harvest, to the pray'r he makes,
When, Isaac like, the solitary saint
Walks forth to meditate at even-tide,
And think on her, who thinks not for herself.
Forgive him, then, thou bustler in concerns
Of little worth, an idler in the best,
If, author of no mischief and some good,
He seek his proper happiness by means
That may advance, but cannot hinder, thine.
Nor, though he tread the secret path of life,
Engage no notice, and enjoy much ease,
Account him an incumbrance on the state,
Receiving benefits, and rend'ring none.
His sphere though humble, if that humble sphere
Shine with his fair example, and though small
His influence, if that influence all be spent
In soothing sorrow and in quenching strife,
In aiding helpless indigence, in works
From which at least a grateful few derive

Some taste of comfort in a world of wo,
Then let the supercilious great confess
He serves his country, recompenses well
The state, beneath the shadow of whose vine
He sits secure, and in the scale of life
Holds no ignoble, though a slighted, place.
The man, whose virtues are more felt than seen,
Must drop indeed the hope of public praise;
But he may boast what few that win it can—
That, if his country stand not by his skill,
At least his follies have not wrought her fall.
Polite refinement offers him in vain
Her golden tube, through which a sensual world
Draws gross impurity, and likes it well,
The neat conveyance hiding all th' offence.
Not that he peevishly rejects a mode
Because that world adopts it. If it bear
The stamp and clear impression of good sense,
And be not costly more than of true worth,
He puts it on, and, for decorum sake,
Can wear it e'en as gracefully as she.
She judges of refinement by the eye,
He by the test of conscience, and a heart
Not soon deceiv'd; aware that what is base

No polish can make sterling: and that vice,
Though well perfum'd and elegantly dress'd,
Like an unburied carcase trick'd with flow'rs,
Is but a garnish'd nuisance, fitter far
For cleanly riddance than for fair attire.
So life glides smoothly and by stealth away,
More golden than that age of fabled gold
Renown'd in ancient song; not vex'd with care
Or stain'd with guilt, benificent, approv'd
Of God and man, and peaceful in its end.
So glide my life away! and so at last,
My share of duties decently fulfill'd,
May some disease, not tardy to perform
Its destin'd office, yet with gentle stroke,
Dismiss me, weary, to a safe retreat
Beneath the turf that I have often trod.
It shall not grieve me, then, that once, when call'd
To dress a Sofa with the flow'rs of verse,
I play'd awhile, obedient to the fair,
With that light task; but soon, to please her more,
Whom flow'rs alone I knew would little please,
Let fall th' unfinish'd wreath, and rov'd for fruit;
Rov'd far, and gather'd much: some harsh, 'tis true,
Pick'd from the thorns and briers of reproof,

But wholesome, well-digested; grateful some
To palates that can taste immortal truth;
Insipid else, and sure to be despis'd.
But all is in his hand whose praise I seek.
In vain the poet sings, and the world hears,
If he regard not, though divine the theme.
'Tis not in artful measures, in the chime
And idle tinkling of a minstrel's lyre,
To charm his ear, whose eye is on the heart;
Whose frown can disappoint the proudest strain,
Whose approbation—prosper even mine.

THE

SECOND ADVENT.

THE groans of nature in this nether world,
Which Heav'n has heard for ages, have an end.
Foretold by prophets, and by poets sung,
Whose fire was kindled at the prophets' lamp,
The time of rest, the promis'd sabbath, comes.
Six thousand years of sorrow have well-nigh
Fulfill'd their tardy and disastrous course
Over a sinful world; and what remains
Of this tempestuous state of human things,
Is merely as the working of a sea
Before a calm, that rocks itself to rest:
For He, whose car the winds are, and the clouds
The dust that waits upon his sultry march,
When sin hath mov'd him, and his wrath is hot,
Shall visit earth in mercy; shall descend,
Propitious, in his chariot pav'd with love;
And what his storms have blasted and defac'd
For man's revolt, shall with a smile repair.

Sweet is the harp of prophecy; too sweet
Not to be wrong'd by a mere mortal touch:
Nor can the wonders it records be sung
To meaner music, and not suffer loss.
But, when a poet, or when one like me,
Happy to rove among poetic flow'rs,
Though poor in skill to rear them, lights at last
On some fair theme, some theme divinely fair,
Such is the impulse and the spur he feels
To give it praise proportion'd to its worth,
That not t' attempt it, arduous as he deems
The labour, were a task more arduous still.

Oh scenes surpassing fable, and yet true,
Scenes of accomplish'd bliss! which who can see,
Though but in distant prospect, and not feel
His soul refresh'd with foretaste of the joy?
Rivers of gladness water all the earth,
And clothe all climes with beauty; the reproach
Of barrenness is past. The fruitful field
Laughs with abundance; and the land, once lean,
Or fertile only in its own disgrace,
Exults to see its thistly curse repeal'd.
The various seasons woven into one,

And that one season an eternal spring,
The garden fears no blight, and needs no fence,
For there is none to covet, all are full.
The lion, and the libbard, and the bear,
Graze with the fearless flocks; all bask at noon
Together, or all gambol in the shade
Of the same grove, and drink one common stream.
Antipathies are none. No foe to man
Lurks in the serpent now: the mother sees,
And smiles to see, her infant's playful hand
Stretch'd forth to dally with the crested worm,
To stroke his azure neck, or to receive
The lambent homage of his arrowy tongue.
All creatures worship man, and all mankind
One Lord, one Father. Error has no place:
That creeping pestilence is driv'n away;
The breath of heav'n has chas'd it. In the heart
No passion touches a discordant string,
But all is harmony and love. Disease
Is not: the pure and uncontam'nate blood
Holds its due course, nor fears the frost of age.
One song employs all nations; and all cry,
"Worthy the Lamb, for he was slain for us!"
The dwellers in the vales and on the rocks

Shout to each other, and the mountain tops
From distant mountains catch the flying joy;
Till, nation after nation taught the strain,
Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round.
Behold the measure of the promise fill'd;
See Salem built, the labour of a God!
Bright as a sun the sacred city shines;
All kingdoms and all princes of the earth
Flock to that light; the glory of all lands
Flows into her; unbounded is her joy,
And endless her increase. Thy rams are there,
*Nebaioth, and the flocks of Kedar there;
The looms of Ormus, and the mines of Ind,
And Saba's spicy groves, pay tribute there.
Praise is in all her gates: upon her walls,
And in her streets, and in her spacious courts,
Is heard salvation. Eastern Java there
Kneels with the native of the farthest west;
And Æthiopia spreads abroad the hand,
And worships. Her report has travell'd forth

* Nebaioth and Kedar, the sons of Ishmael, and progenitors of the Arabs, in the prophetic scripture here alluded to, may be reasonably considered as representatives of the Gentiles at large.

Into all lands. From ev'ry clime they come
To see thy beauty and to share thy joy,
O Sion! an assembly such as earth
Saw never, such as Heav'n stoops down to see.

Come then, and, added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, the crown of all the earth,
Thou who alone art worthy! It was thine
By ancient covenant, ere nature's birth;
And thou hast made it thine by purchase since,
And overpaid its value with thy blood.
Thy saints proclaim the king; and in their hearts
Thy title is engraven with a pen
Dipt in the fountain of eternal love.
Thy saints proclaim the king; and thy delay
Gives courage to their foes, who, could they see
The dawn of thy last advent, long-desir'd,
Would creep into the bowels of the hills,
And flee for safety to the falling rocks.
The very spirit of the world is tir'd
Of its own taunting question, ask'd so long,
"Where is the promise of your Lord's approach?"
The infidel has shot his bolts away,
Till, his exhausted quiver yielding none,

He gleans the blunted shafts that have recoil'd,
And aims them at the shield of truth again.
The veil is rent, rent too by priestly hands,
That hides divinity from mortal eyes;
And all the mysteries to faith propos'd,
Insulted and traduc'd, are cast aside,
As useless, to the moles and to the bats.
They now are deem'd the faithful, and are prais'd,
Who, constant only in rejecting thee,
Deny thy Godhead with a martyr's zeal,
And quit their office for their error's sake.
Blind, and in love with darkness! yet ev'n these
Worthy, compar'd with sycophants, who kneel
Thy name adoring, and then preach the man!
So fares thy church. But how thy church may fare
The world takes little thought. Who will may preach,
And what they will. All pastors are alike
To wand'ring sheep, resolv'd to follow none.
Two gods divide them all—Pleasure and Gain:
For these they live, they sacrifice to these,
And in their service wage perpetual war
With conscience and with thee. Lust in their hearts,
And mischief in their hands, they roam the earth

To prey upon each other; stubborn, fierce,
High-minded, foaming out their own disgrace.
Thy prophets speak of such; and, noting down
The features of the last degen'rate times,
Exhibit ev'ry lineament of these.
Come then, and, added to thy many crowns,
Receive yet one, as radiant as the rest,
Due to thy last and most effectual work,
Thy word fulfill'd, the conquest of a world!

THE

PATRIOT HERO.

LET laurels, drench'd in pure Parnassian dews,
Reward his mem'ry, dear to ev'ry muse,
Who, with a courage of unshaken root,
In honour's field advancing his firm foot,
Plants it upon the line that justice draws,
And will prevail or perish in her cause.
'Tis to the virtues of such men, man owes
His portion in the good that heaven bestows.
And, when recording history displays
Feats of renown, though wrought in ancient days,
Tells of a few stout hearts that fought and died
Where duty plac'd them, at their country's side;
The man that is not mov'd with what he reads,
That takes not fire at their heroic deeds,
Unworthy of the blessings of the brave,
Is base in kind, and born to be a slave.

THE

KINGLY OFFICE.

I PITY kings whom worship waits upon,
Obsequious, from the cradle to the throne;
Before whose infant eyes the flatt'rer bows,
And binds a wreath about their baby brows;
Whom education stiffens into state,
And death awakens from that dream too late.
Oh! if servility with supple knees,
Whose trade it is to smile, to crouch, to please;
If smooth dissimulation, skill'd to grace
A devil's purpose with an angel's face;
If smiling peeresses and simp'ring peers,
Encompassing his throne a few short years;
If the gilt carriage and the pamper'd steed,
That wants no driving, and disdains the lead;
If guards, mechanically form'd in ranks,
Playing, at beat of drum, their martial pranks,

Should'ring and standing as if stuck to stone,
While condescending majesty looks on;
If monarchy consist in such base things,
Sighing, I say again, I pity kings!

To be suspected, thwarted, and withstood,
Ev'n when he labours for his country's good;
To see a band, called patriot, for no cause,
But that they catch at popular applause,
Careless of all th' anxiety he feels,
Hook disappointment on the public wheels;
With all their flippant fluency of tongue,
Most confident, when palpably most wrong;
If this be kingly, then farewell for me
All kingship; and may I be poor and free!

To be the Table Talk of clubs up stairs,
To which th' unwash'd artificer repairs,
T' indulge his genius after long fatigue,
By diving into cabinet intrigue;
(For what kings deem a toil, as well they may,
To him is relaxation and mere play)
To win no praise when well-wrought plans prevail,
But to be rudely censur'd when they fail;

To doubt the love his fav'rites may pretend,
And in reality to find no friend;
If he indulge a cultivated taste,
His gall'ries with the works of art well grac'd,
To hear it call'd extravagance and waste;
If these attendants, and if such as these,
Must follow royalty, then welcome ease;
However humble and confin'd the sphere,
Happy the state that has not these to fear.
Oh! bright occasions of dispensing good,
How seldom us'd, how little understood!
To pour in virtue's lap her just reward,
Keep vice restrain'd behind a double guard;
To quell the faction that affronts the throne
By silent magnanimity alone;
To nurse with tender care the thriving arts,
Watch ev'ry beam philosophy imparts;
To give religion her unbridled scope,
Nor judge by statute a believer's hope;
With close fidelity and love unfeign'd,
To keep the matrimonial bond unstain'd;
Covetous only of a virtuous praise;
His life a lesson to the land he sways;

To touch the sword with conscientious awe,
Nor draw it but when duty bids him draw;
To sheath it in the peace-restoring close
With joy beyond what victory bestows;
Blest country, where these kingly glories shine!
Blest England, if this happiness be thine!

A. Guard what you say; the patriotic tribe
Will sneer and charge you with a bribe.—*B.* A bribe?
The worth of his three kingdoms I defy,
To lure me to the baseness of a lie.
And, of all lies, (be that one poet's boast)
The lie that flatters I abhor the most.
Those arts be their's who hate his gentle reign,
But he that loves him has no need to feign.

Oh, place me in some heav'n-protected isle,
Where peace, and equity, and freedom smile;
Where no volcano pours his fiery flood,
No crested warrior dips his plume in blood;
Where pow'r secures what industry has won;
Where to succeed is not to be undone;
A land that distant tyrants hate in vain,
In Britain's isle, beneath a George's reign!

MAN A FREE AGENT.

PLAC'D for his trial on this bustling stage,
From thoughtless youth to ruminating age,
Free in his will to choose or to refuse,
Man may improve the crisis, or abuse;
Else, on the fatalist's unrighteous plan,
Say, to what bar amenable were man?
With nought in charge, he could betray no trust;
And, if he fell, would fall because he must;
If love reward him, or if vengeance strike,
His recompense is both unjust alike.
Divine authority within his breast
Brings ev'ry thought, word, action, to the test;
Warns him or prompts, approves him or restrains,
As reason, or as passion, takes the reins.
Heav'n from above, and conscience from within,
Cries in his startled ear—Abstain from sin!
The world around solicits his desire,
And kindles in his soul a treach'rous fire;
While, all his purposes and steps to guard,
Peace follows virtue, as its sure reward;
And pleasure brings as surely in her train
Remorse, and sorrow, and vindictive pain.

NOVELS.

YE writers of what none with safety reads,
Footing it in the dance that fancy leads:
Ye novelists, who mar what ye would mend,
Sniv'ling and driv'ling folly without end;
Whose corresponding misses fill the ream
With sentimental frippery and dream,
Caught in a delicate soft silken net
By some lewd earl, or rake-hell baronet:
Ye pimps, who, under virtue's fair pretence,
Steal to the closet of young innocence,
And teach her, unexperienc'd yet and green,
To scribble as you scribbled at fifteen;
Who, kindling a combustion of desire,
With some cold moral think to quench the fire;
Though all your engineering proves in vain,
The dribbling stream ne'er puts it out again:
Oh that a verse had pow'r, and could command
Far, far away, these flesh-flies of the land;

Who fasten without mercy on the fair,
And suck, and leave a craving maggot there.
Howe'er disguis'd th' inflammatory tale,
And cover'd with a fine-spun specious veil;
Such writers, and such readers, owe the gust
And relish of their pleasure all to lust.

THE PRESS.

HOW shall I speak thee, or thy pow'r address,
Thou god of our idolatry, the press?
By thee, religion, liberty, and laws,
Exert their influence, and advance their cause;
By thee, worse plagues than Pharaoh's land befel,
Diffus'd, make earth the vestibule of hell;
Thou fountain, at which drink the good and wise;
Thou ever-bubbling spring of endless lies;
Like Eden's dread probationary tree,
Knowledge of good and evil is from thee.

MODERN

SCEPTICS.

NO wild enthusiast ever yet could rest
Till half mankind were like himself possess'd.
Philosophers, who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt;
Church quacks, with passions under no command,
Who fill the world with doctrines contraband,
Discov'rers of they know not what, confin'd
Within no bounds—the blind that lead the blind;
To streams of popular opinion drawn,
Deposit in those shallows all their spawn.
The wriggling fry soon fill the creeks around,
Pois'ning the waters where their swarms abound.
Scorn'd by the nobler tenants of the flood,
Minnows and gudgeons gorge th' unwholesome food.
The propagated myriads spread so fast,
E'en Leuwenhoech himself would stand aghast,
Employ'd to calculate th' enormous sum,
And own his crab-computing pow'rs o'ercome.

Is this hyperbole? The world well known,
Your sober thoughts will hardly find it one.
Fresh confidence the speculatist takes
From ev'ry hair-brain'd proselyte he makes;
And therefore prints: himself but half deceiv'd,
Till others have the soothing tale believ'd.
Hence comment after comment, spun as fine
As bloated spiders draw the flimsy line:
Hence the same word, that bids our lusts obey,
Is misapplied to sanctify their sway.
If stubborn Greek refuse to be his friend,
Hebrew or Syriac shall be forc'd to bend:
If languages and copies all cry, No—
Somebody prov'd it centuries ago.
Like trout pursued, the critic, in despair,
Darts to the mud, and finds his safety there.
Patient of contradiction, as a child
Affable, humble, diffident, and mild;
Such was Sir Isaac, and such Boyle and Locke:
Your blund'rer is as sturdy as a rock.
The creature is so sure to kick and bite,
A muleteer's the man to set him right.
First appetite enlists him truth's sworn foe,
Then obstinate self-will confirms him so.

Tell him he wanders; that his error leads
To fatal ills; that, though the path he treads
Be flow'ry, and he see no cause of fear,
Death and the pains of hell attend him there;
In vain; the slave of arrogance and pride,
He has no hearing on the prudent side.
His still refuted quirks he still repeats;
New-mis'd objections with new quibbles meets;
Till, sinking in the quicksand he defends,
He dies disputing, and the contest ends—
But not the mischiefs; they, still left behind,
Like thistle-seeds, are sown by ev'ry wind.

Thus men go wrong with an ingenious skill;
Bend the straight rule to their own crooked will;
And, with a clear and shining lamp supplied,
First put it out, then take it for a guide.
Halting on crutches of unequal size;
One leg by truth supported, one by lies;
They sidle to the goal with awkward pace,
Secure of nothing—but to lose the race.

Faults in the life breed errors in the brain;
And these, reciprocally, those again.
The mind and conduct mutually imprint
And stamp their image in each other's mint:

Each, sire and dam of an infernal race,
Begetting and conceiving all that's base.
Hear the just law—the judgment of the skies!
He that hates truth shall be the dupe of lies:
And he that *will* be cheated to the last,
Delusions, strong as hell, shall bind him fast.

TRUE GAIETY.

WHOM call we gay? That honour has been long
The boast of mere pretenders to the name.
The innocent are gay—the lark is gay,
That dries his feathers, saturate with dew,
Beneath the rosy cloud, while yet the beams
Of day-spring overshoot his humble nest.
The peasant too, a witness of his song,
Himself a songster, is as gay as he.
But save me from the gaiety of those
Whose head-aches nail them to a noon-day bed;
And save me too from their's, whose haggard eyes
Flash desperation, and betray their pangs
For property stripp'd off by cruel chance;
From gaiety that fills the bones with pain,
The mouth with blasphemy, the heart with wo.

CITIES

CHARACTERIZED.

BUT, though true worth and virtue in the mild
And genial soil of cultivated life
Thrive most, and may perhaps thrive only there,
Yet not in cities oft: in proud and gay
And gain-devoted cities. Thither flow,
As to a common and most noisome sew'r,
The dregs and feculence of ev'ry land.
In cities foul example on most minds
Begets its likeness. Rank abundance breeds
In gross and pamper'd cities sloth and lust,
And wantonness and gluttonous excess.
In cities vice is hidden with most ease,
Or seen with least reproach; and virtue, taught
By frequent lapse, can hope no triumph there
Beyond th' achievement of successful flight.
I do confess them nurs'ries of the arts,
In which they flourish most; where, in the beams
Of warm encouragement, and in the eye

Of public note, they reach their perfect size.
Such London is, by taste and wealth proclaim'd
The fairest capital of all the world,
By riot and incontinence the worst.

Oh thou, resort and mart of all the earth,
Chequer'd with all complexions of mankind,
And spotted with all crimes; in whom I see
Much that I love, and more that I admire,
And all that I abhor; thou freckled fair,
That pleasest and yet shock'st me, I can laugh
And I can weep, can hope, and can despond,
Feel wrath and pity, when I think on thee!
Ten righteous would have sav'd a city once,
And thou hast many righteous.—Well for thee—
That salt preserves thee; more corrupted else,
And therefore more obnoxious, at this hour
Than Sodom in her day had pow'r to be,
For whom God heard his Abr'am plead in vain.

RURAL LIFE

PREFERRED.

GOD made the country, and man made the town:
What wonder then that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all, should most abound
And least be threaten'd in the fields and groves?
Possess ye, therefore, ye, who, born about
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives, possess ye still
Your element; there only can ye shine;
There only minds like your's can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
The pensive wand'rer in their shades. At eve
The moon-beam, sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
Birds warbling all the music. We can spare
The splendour of your lamps; they but eclipse
Our softer satellite. Your songs confound

Our more harmonious notes: the thrush departs
Scar'd, and th' offended nightingale is mute.
There is a public mischief in your mirth;
It plagues your country. Folly such as your's,
Grac'd with a sword, and worthier of a fan,
Has made, what enemies could ne'er have done,
Our arch of empire, stedfast but for you,
A mutilated structure, soon to fall.

MORAL

REFLECTIONS.

OH for a lodge in some vast wilderness,
Some boundless contiguity of shade,
Where rumour of oppression and deceit,
Of unsuccessful or successful war,
Might never reach me more. My ear is pain'd,
My soul is sick, with ev'ry day's report
Of wrong and outrage with which earth is fill'd.
There is no flesh in man's obdurate heart,
It does not feel for man; the nat'ral bond
Of brotherhood is sever'd as the flax
That falls asunder at the touch of fire.
He finds his fellow guilty of a skin
Not colour'd like his own; and, having pow'r
T' enforce the wrong, for such a worthy cause
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful prey.
Lands intersected by a narrow frith
Abhor each other. Mountains interpos'd

Make enemies of nations, who had else,
Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.
Thus man devotes his brother, and destroys;
And, worse than all, and most to be deplor'd,
As human nature's broadest, foulest blot,
Chains him, and tasks him, and exacts his sweat
With stripes, that mercy, with a bleeding heart,
Weeps when she sees inflicted on a beast.
Then what is man? And what man, seeing this,
And having human feelings, does not blush,
And hang his head, to think himself a man?
I would not have a slave to till my ground,
To carry me, to fan me while I sleep,
And tremble when I awake, for all the wealth
That sinews bought and sold have ever earn'd.
No: dear as freedom is, and in my heart's
Just estimation priz'd above all price,
I had much rather be myself the slave,
And wear the bonds, than fasten them on him.
We have no slaves at home.—Then why abroad?
And they themselves, once ferried o'er the wave
That parts us, are emancipate and loos'd.
Slaves cannot breathe in England; if their lungs

Receive our air, that moment they are free;
They touch our country, and their shackles fall.
That's noble, and bespeaks a nation proud
And jealous of the blessing. Spread it then,
And let it circulate through ev'ry vein
Of all your empire; that where Britain's pow'r
Is felt, mankind may feel her mercy too.

Sure there is need of social intercourse,
Benevolence, and peace, and mutual aid,
Between the nations, in a world that seems
To toll the death-bell of its own decease,
And by the voice of all its elements
To preach the gen'ral doom.* When were the winds
Let slip with such a warrant to destroy?
When did the waves so haughtily o'erleap
Their ancient barriers, deluging the dry?
Fires from beneath, and meteors† from above,
Portentous, unexampled, unexplain'd,
Have kindled beacons in the skies; and th' old

* Alluding to the calamities at Jamaica.

† August 18, 1783.

And crazy earth has had her shaking fits
More frequent, and foregone her usual rest.
Is it a time to wrangle, when the props
And pillars of our planet seem to fail,
And Nature* with a dim and sickly eye
To wait the close of all?—

Happy the man who sees a God employ'd
In all the good and ill that chequer life!
Resolving all events, with their effects
And manifold results, into the will
And arbitration wise of the Supreme.
Did not his eye rule all things, and intend
The least of our concerns (since from the least
The greatest oft originate); could chance
Find place in his dominion, or dispose
One lawless particle to thwart his plan;
Then God might be surpris'd, and unforeseen
Contingence might alarm him, and disturb
The smooth and equal course of his affairs.

* Alluding to the fog that covered both Europe and Asia during the whole summer of 1783.

This truth philosophy, though eagle-ey'd
In nature's tendencies, oft overlooks;
And, having found his instrument, forgets,
Or disregards, or, more presumptuous still,
Denies the pow'r that wields it. God proclaims
His hot displeasure against foolish men
That live an atheist life: involves the heav'n
In tempests; quits his grasp upon the winds,
And gives them all their fury; bids a plague
Kindle a fiery boil upon the skin,
And putrify the breath of blooming health.
He calls for famine, and the meagre fiend
Blows mildew from between his shrivel'd lips,
And taints the golden ear. He springs his mines,
And desolates a nation at a blast.
Forth steps the spruce philosopher, and tells
Of homogeneal and discordant springs
And principles; of causes, how they work
By necessary laws their sure effects;
Of action and re-action. He has found
The source of the disease that nature feels,
And bids the world take heart and banish fear.
Thou fool! will thy discovery of the cause

Suspend th' effect, or heal it? Has not God
Still wrought by means since first he made the world?
And did he not of old employ his means
To drown it? What is his creation less
Than a capacious reservoir of means
Form'd for his use, and ready at his will?
Go, dress thine eyes with eye-salve; ask of him,
Or ask of whomsoever he has taught;
And learn, though late, the genuine cause of all.

ENGLAND.

ENGLAND, with all thy faults, I love thee still—
My country! and, while yet a nook is left
Where English minds and manners may be found,
Shall be constrain'd to love thee. Though thy clime
Be fickle, and thy year most part deform'd
With dripping rains, or wither'd by a frost,
I would not yet exchange thy sullen skies,
And fields without a flow'r, for warmer France
With all her vines; nor for Ausonia's groves
Of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bow'rs.
To shake thy senate, and from heights sublime
Of patriot eloquence to flash down fire
Upon thy foes, was never meant my task:
But I can feel thy fortunes, and partake
Thy joys and sorrows, with as true a heart
As any thund'rer there. And I can feel
Thy follies too; and with a just disdain

Frown at effeminates, whose very looks
Reflect dishonour on the land I love.
How, in the name of soldership and sense,
Should England prosper, when such things, as smooth
And tender as a girl, all essenc'd o'er
With odours, and as profligate as sweet;
Who sell their laurel for a myrtle wreath,
And love when they should fight; when such as these
Presume to lay their hand upon the ark
Of her magnificent and awful cause?
Time was when it was praise and boast enough
In ev'ry clime, and travel where we might,
That we were born her children. Praise enough
To fill th' ambition of a private man,
That Chatham's language was his mother tongue,
And Wolfe's great name compatriot with his own.
Farewell those honours, and farewell with them
The hope of such hereafter! They have fall'n
Each in his field of glory; one in arms,
And one in council—Wolfe upon the lap
Of smiling victory that moment won,
And Chatham heart-sick of his country's shame!

They made us many soldiers. Chatham, still
Consulting England's happiness at home,
Secur'd it by an unforgiving frown,
If any wrong'd her. Wolfe, where'er he fought,
Put so much of his heart into his act,
That his example had a magnet's force,
And all were swift to follow whom all lov'd.
Those suns are set. Oh, rise some other such!
Or all that we have left is empty talk
Of old achievements, and despair of new.

Now hoist the sail, and let the streamers float
Upon the wanton breezes. Strew the deck
With lavender, and sprinkle liquid sweets,
That no rude savour maritime invade
The nose of nice nobility! Breathe soft,
Ye Clarionets; and softer still, ye flutes;
That winds and waters, lull'd by magic sounds,
May bear us smoothly to the Gallic shore!
True, we have lost an empire—let it pass.
True, we may thank the perfidy of France,
That pick'd the jewel out of England's crown,
With all the cunning of an envious shrew.
And let that pass—'twas but a trick of state!

A brave man knows no malice, but at once
Forgets in peace the injuries of war,
And gives his direst foe a friend's embrace.
And, sham'd as we have been, to th' very beard
Brav'd and defied, and in our own sea prov'd
Too weak for those decisive blows that once
Ensur'd us mast'ry there, we yet retain
Some small pre-eminence; we justly boast
At least superior jockeyship, and claim
The honours of the turf as all our own!
Go, then, well worthy of the praise ye seek,
And show the shame ye might conceal at home
In foreign eyes!—be grooms, and win the plate,
Where once your nobler fathers won a crown!

PLEASURES

OF DOMESTIC PEACE.

DOMESTIC happiness, thou only bliss
Of Paradise that hast surviv'd the fall!
Though few now taste thee unimpair'd and pure,
Or, tasting, long enjoy thee; too infirm,
Or too incautious, to preserve thy sweets
Unmixt with drops of bitter, which neglect
Or temper sheds into thy crystal cup.
Thou art the nurse of virtue—in thine arms
She smiles, appearing, as in truth she is,
Heav'n-born, and destin'd to the skies again.
Thou art not known where pleasure is ador'd,
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist
And wand'ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
Of novelty, her fickle frail support;
For thou art meek and constant, hating change,
And finding, in the calm of truth-tried love,
Joys that her stormy raptures never yield.
Forsaking thee, what shipwreck have we made
Of honour, dignity, and fair renown!

THE

ADULTRESS.

TH' adultress! what a theme for angry verse!
What provocation to th' indignant heart
That feels for injur'd love! but I disdain
The nauseous task to paint her as she is,
Cruel, abandon'd, glorying in her shame!
No:—let her pass, and, chariotted along
In guilty splendour, shake the public ways;
The frequency of crimes has wash'd them white!
And verse of mine shall never brand the wretch,
Whom matrons now, of character unmarch'd,
And chaste themselves, are not asham'd to own.
Virtue and vice had bound'ries in old time,
Not to be pass'd: and she, that had renounc'd
Her sex's honour, was renounc'd herself
By all that priz'd it; not for prud'ry's sake,
But dignity's, resentful of the wrong.
'Twas hard, perhaps, on here and there a waif,
Desirous to return, and not receiv'd;

But was an wholesome rigour in the main,
And taught th' unblemish'd to preserve with care
That purity, whose loss was loss of all.
Men, too, were nice in honour in those days,
And judg'd offenders well. Then he that sharp'd,
And pocketted a prize by fraud obtain'd,
Was mark'd and shunn'd as odious. He that sold
His country, or was slack when she requir'd
His ev'ry nerve in action and at stretch,
Paid, with the blood that he had basely spar'd,
The price of his default. But now—yes, now
We are become so candid and so fair,
So lib'ral in construction, and so rich
In Christian charity, (good-natur'd age!)
That they are safe, sinners of either sex,
Transgress what laws they may. Well dress'd, well bred,
Well equipag'd, is ticket good enough
To pass us readily through ev'ry door.

THE VANITY

OF OUR

GENERAL PURSUITS.

I SEE that all are wand'rers, gone astray
Each in his own delusions; they are lost
In chase of fancied happiness, still woo'd
And never won. Dream after dream ensues;
And still they dream that they shall still succeed,
And still are disappointed. Rings the world
With the vain stir. I sum up half mankind,
And add two thirds of the remaining half,
And find the total of their hopes and fears
Dreams, empty dreams. The million flit as gay
As if created only like the fly,
That spreads his motley wings in th' eye of noon,
To sport their season, and be seen no more.
The rest are sober dreamers, grave and wise,
And pregnant with discov'ries new and rare.
Some write a narrative of wars, and feats
Of heroes little known; and call the rant

An history: describe the man, of whom
His own coevals took but little note;
And paint his person, character, and views,
As they had known him from his mother's womb.
They disentangle from the puzzled skein,
In which obscurity has wrapp'd them up,
The threads of politic and shrewd design,
That ran through all his purposes, and charge
His mind with meanings that he never had,
Or, having, kept conceal'd. Some drill and bore
The solid earth, and from the strata there
Extract a register, by which we learn,
That he who made it, and reveal'd its date
To Moses, was mistaken in its age.
Some, more acute, and more industrious still,
Contrive creation; travel nature up
To the sharp peak of her sublimest height,
And tell us whence the stars; why some are fix'd,
And planetary some; what gave them first
Rotation, from what fountain flow'd their light.
Great contest follows, and much learned dust
Involves the combatants; each claiming truth,
And truth disclaiming both. And thus they spend
The little wick of life's poor shallow lamp,
In playing tricks with nature, giving laws

To distant worlds, and trifling in their own.
Is 't not a pity now, that tickling rheums
Should ever tease the lungs and blear the sight
Of oracles like these? Great pity too,
That, having wielded th' elements, and built
A thousand systems, each in his own way,
They should go out in fume, and be forgot?
Ah! what is life thus spent? and what are they
But frantic who thus spend it? all for smoke—
Eternity for bubbles, proves at last
A senseless bargain. When I see such games
Play'd by the creatures of a pow'r who swears
That he will judge the earth, and call the fool
To a sharp reck'ning that has liv'd in vain;
And when I weigh this seeming wisdom well,
And prove it in th' infallible result
So hollow and so false—I feel my heart
Dissolve in pity, and account the learn'd,
If this be learning, most of all deceiv'd.
Great crimes alarm the conscience, but it sleeps
While thoughtful man is plausibly amus'd.
Defend me, therefore, common sense, say I,
From reveries so airy, from the toil
Of dropping buckets into empty wells,
And growing old in drawing nothing up!

God never meant that man should scale the heav'ns
By strides of human wisdom. In his works,
Though wond'rous, he commands us in his word
To seek *him* rather, where his mercy shines.
The mind indeed, enlighten'd from above,
Views him in all; ascribes to the grand cause
The grand effect; acknowledges with joy
His manner, and with rapture tastes his style.
But never yet did philosophic tube,
That brings the planets home into the eye
Of observation, and discovers, else
Not visible, his family of worlds,
Discover him that rules them; such a veil
Hangs over mortal eyes, blind from the birth,
And dark in things divine. Full often, too,
Our wayward intellect, the more we learn
Of nature, overlooks her author more;
From instrumental causes proud to draw
Conclusions retrograde, and mad mistake.
But if his word once teach us, shoot a ray
Through all the heart's dark chambers, and reveal
Truths undiscern'd but by that holy light,
Then all is plain. Philosophy, baptiz'd
In the pure fountain of eternal love,

Has eyes indeed; and, viewing all she sees
As meant to indicate a God to man,
Gives *him* his praise, and forfeits not her own.
Learning has born such fruit in other days
On all her branches: piety has found
Friends in the friends of science, and true pray'r
Has flow'd from lips wet with Castalian dews.
Such was thy wisdom, Newton, childlike sage!
Sagacious reader of the works of God,
And in his word sagacious. Such too thine,
Milton, whose genius had angelic wings,
And fed on manna! And such thine, in whom
Our British Themis gloried with just cause,
Immortal Hale! for deep discernment prais'd,
And sound integrity, not more than fam'd
For sanctity of manners undefil'd.

All flesh is grass, and all its glory fades
Like the fair flow'r dishevell'd in the wind;
Riches have wings, and grandeur is a dream;
The man we celebrate must find a tomb,
And we that worship him ignoble graves.
Nothing is proof against the gen'ral curse
Of vanity, that seizes all below.

HUMANITY

TO

ANIMALS.

MAN scarce had ris'n, obedient to his call
Who form'd him from the dust, his future grave,
When he was crown'd as never king was since.
God set the diadem upon his head,
And angel choirs attended. Wond'ring stood
The new-made monarch, while before him pass'd,
All happy, and all perfect in their kind,
The creatures, summon'd from their various haunts
To see their sov'reign, and confess his sway.
Vast was his empire, absolute his pow'r,
Or bounded only by a law, whose force
'Twas his sublimest privilege to feel
And own—the law of universal love.

The heart is hard in nature, and unfit
For human fellowship, as being void
Of sympathy, and therefore dead alike

To love and friendship both, that is not pleas'd
With sight of animals enjoying life,
Nor feels their happiness augment his own.
The bounding fawn, that darts across the glade
When none pursues, through mere delight of heart,
And spirits buoyant with excess of glee;
The horse as wanton, and almost as fleet,
That skims the spacious meadow at full speed,
Then stops and snorts, and, throwing high his heels,
Starts to the voluntary race again;
The very kine that gambol at high noon,
The total herd receiving first from one
That leads the dance a summons to be gay,
Though wild their strange vagaries, and uncouth
Their efforts, yet resolv'd with one consent
To give such act and utt'rance as they may
To ecstacy too big to be suppress'd—
These, and a thousand images of bliss,
With which kind nature graces ev'ry scene,
Where cruel man defeats not her design,
Impart to the benevolent, who wish
All that are capable of pleasure pleas'd,

A far superior happiness to their's,
The comfort of a reasonable joy.

In measure, as by force of instinct drawn,
Or by necessity constrain'd, they live
Dependent upon man; those in his fields,
These at his crib, and some beneath his roof.
They prove too often at how dear a rate
He sells protection.—Witness at his foot
The spaniel dying, for some venial fault,
Under dissection of the knotted scourge—
Witness the patient ox, with stripes and yells
Driv'n to the slaughter, goaded, as he runs,
To madness; while the savage at his heels
Laughs at the frantic suff'rer's fury, spent
Upon the guiltless passenger o'erthrown.
He, too, is witness, noblest of the train
That wait on man, the flight-performing horse:
With unsuspecting readiness he takes
His murd'rer on his back, and, push'd all day,
With bleeding sides and flanks that heave for life,
To the far-distant goal, arrives and dies.
So little mercy shows who needs so much!
Does law, so jealous in the cause of man,

Denounce no doom on the delinquent?—None.
He lives, and o'er his brimming beaker boasts
(As if barbarity were high desert)
Th' inglorious feat, and, clamorous in praise
Of the poor brute, seems wisely to suppose
The honours of his matchless horse his own!
But many a crime, deem'd innocent on earth,
Is register'd in heav'n; and these, no doubt,
Have each their record, with a curse annex'd.
Man may dismiss compassion from his heart,
But God will never. When he charg'd the Jew
T' assist his foe's down-fallen beast to rise;
And when the bush-exploring boy, that seiz'd
The young, to let the parent bird go free;
Prov'd he not plainly that his meaner works
Are yet his care, and have an int'rest all,
All, in the universal Father's love?
On Noah, and in him, on all mankind,
The charter was conferr'd, by which we hold
The flesh of animals in fee, and claim
O'er all we feed on pow'r of life and death.
But read the instrument, and mark it well:
Th' oppression of a tyrannous control
Can find no warrant there. Feed then, and yield

Thanks for thy food. Carnivorous, through sin,
Feed on the slain, but spare the living brute!

I would not enter on my list of friends
(Though grac'd with polish'd manners and fine sense,
Yet wanting sensibility) the man
Who needlessly sets foot upon a worm.
An inadvertent step may crush the snail
That crawls at ev'ning in the public path;
But he that has humanity, forewarn'd,
Will tread aside, and let the reptile live.

FASHIONABLE

FRIENDSHIP.

WHENCE comes it then, that in the wane of life,
Though nothing have occurr'd to kindle strife,
We find the friends we fancied we had won,
Though num'rous once, reduc'd to few or none?
Can gold grow worthless that has stood the touch?
No—gold they seem'd, but they were never such.

Horatio's servant once, with bow and cringe,
Swinging the parlour-door upon its hinge,
Dreading a negative, and overaw'd
Lest he should trespass, begg'd to go abroad.
Go, fellow!—whither?—turning short about—
Nay—stay at home—you're always going out.
'Tis but a step, sir, just at the street's end.—
For what?—An please you, sir, to see a friend.
A friend! Horatio cried, and seem'd to start—
Yea marry shalt thou, and with all my heart.—

And fetch my cloak; for, though the night be raw,
I'll see him too—the first I ever saw.

I knew the man, and knew his nature mild,
And was his plaything often when a child;
But somewhat at that moment pinch'd him close,
Else he was seldom bitter or morose.
Perhaps, his confidence just then betray'd,
His grief might prompt him with the speech he made;
Perhaps 'twas mere good-humour gave it birth,
The harmless play of pleasantry and mirth.
Howe'er it was, his language, in my mind,
Bespoke at least a man that knew mankind.

THE POET.

I KNOW the mind that feels indeed the fire
The muse imparts, and can command the lyre,
Acts with a force, and kindles with a zeal,
Whate'er the theme, that others never feel.
If human woes her soft attention claim,
A tender sympathy pervades the frame,
She pours a sensibility divine
Along the nerve of ev'ry feeling line.
But, if a deed not tamely to be born
Fire indignation and a sense of scorn,
The strings are swept with such a pow'r so loud,
The storm of music shakes th' astonish'd crowd.
So, when remote futurity is brought
Before the keen inquiry of her thought,
A terrible sagacity informs
The poet's heart; he looks to distant storms;
He hears the thunder ere the tempest low'rs;
And, arm'd with strength surpassing human pow'rs,
Seizes events as yet unknown to man,
And darts his soul into the dawning plan.

REFLECTIONS

ON

POETRY.

GIVE me the line that plows its stately course
Like a proud swan, conq'ring the stream by force;
That, like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,
Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.
When labour and when dullness, club in hand,
Like the two figures at St Dunstan's, stand,
Beating alternately, in measur'd time,
The clock-work tintinabulum of rhime,
Exact and regular the sounds will be;
But such mere quarter-strokes are not for me.
From him who rears a poem lank and long,
To him who strains his all into a song;
Perhaps some bonny Caledonian air,
All birks and braes, though he was never there;
Or, having whelp'd a prologue with great pains,
Feels himself spent, and fumbles for his brains;

A prologue interdash'd with many a stroke—
An art contriv'd to advertise a joke,
So that the jest is clearly to be seen,
Not in the words—but in the gap between:
Manner is all in all, whate'er is writ,
The substitute for genius, sense, and wit.
To dally much with subjects mean and low,
Proves that the mind is weak, or makes it so.
Neglected talents rust into decay,
And ev'ry effort ends in push-pin play.
The man that means success, should soar above
A soldier's feather, or a lady's glove;
Else, summoning the muse to such a theme,
The fruit of all her labour is whipt-cream.
Nature, exerting an unwearied pow'r,
Forms, opens, and gives scent to, ev'ry flow'r;
Spreads the fresh verdure of the field, and leads
The dancing Naiads through the dewy meads:
She fills profuse ten thousand little throats
With music, modulating all their notes;
And charms the woodland scenes, and wilds unknown,
With artless airs and concerts of her own.

But seldom (as if fearful of expense)
Vouchsafes to man a poet's just pretence—
Fervency, freedom, fluency of thought,
Harmony, strength, words exquisitely sought;
Fancy, that from the bow that spans the sky,
Brings colours, dipt in heav'n, that never die;
A soul exhalted above earth, a mind
Skill'd in the characters that form mankind;
And, as the sun in rising beauty dress'd,
Looks to the westward from the dappled east,
And marks, whatever clouds may interpose,
Ere yet his race begins, its glorious close;
An eye like his to catch the distant goal;
Or, ere the wheels of verse begin to roll,
Like his to shed illuminating rays
On ev'ry scene and subject it surveys:
Thus grac'd, the man asserts a poet's name,
And the world cheerfully admits the claim.

GENERAL

LITERATURE.

BOOKS, therefore, not the scandal of the shelves,
In which lewd sensualists print out themselves;
Nor those in which the stage gives vice a blow,
With what success let modern manners show;
Nor his who, for the bane of thousands born,
Built God a church, and laugh'd his word to scorn,
Skilful alike to seem devout and just,
And stab religion with a sly side-thrust;
Nor those of learn'd philologists, who chase
A panting syllable through time and space,
Start it at home, and hunt it in the dark,
To Gaul, to Greece, and into Noah's ark;
But such as learning without false pretence,
The friend of truth, th' associate of sound sense,
And such as in the zeal of good design,
Strong judgment lab'ring in the scripture mine,
All such as manly and great souls produce,
Worthy to live, and of eternal use:

Behold in these what leisure hours demand,
Amusement and true knowledge hand in hand.
Luxury gives the mind a childish cast,
And while she polishes, perverts the taste;
Habits of close attention, thinking heads,
Become more rare as dissipation spreads,
Till authors hear at length, one gen'ral cry,
Tickle and entertain us, or we die.
The loud demand, from year to year the same,
Beggars invention and makes fancy lame,
Till farce itself, most mournfully jejune,
Calls for the kind assistance of a tune;
And novels (witness ev'ry month's review)
Belie their name, and offer nothing new.
The mind, relaxing into needful sport,
Should turn to writers of an abler sort,
Whose wit well manag'd, and whose classic style,
Give truth a lustre, and make wisdom smile.

ON OBSERVING

SOME NAMES OF LITTLE NOTE

RECORDED IN THE BIOGRAPHIA BRITANNICA.

OH, fond attempt to give a deathless lot
To names ignoble, born to be forgot!
In vain, recorded in historic page,
They court the notice of a future age:
Those twinkling tiny lustres of the land,
Drop one by one from Fame's neglecting hand;
Lethæan gulphs receive them as they fall,
And dark oblivion soon absorbs them all.
So when a child, as playful children use,
Has burnt to tinder a stale last year's news,
The flame extinct, he views the roving fire—
There goes my lady, and there goes the squire,
There goes the parson, oh! illustrious spark,
And there, scarce less illustrious, goes the clerk!

INDUSTRY

NECESSARY TO HEALTH.

BY ceaseless action all that is subsists.
Constant rotation of th' unwearied wheel
That nature rides upon, maintains her health,
Her beauty, her fertility. She dreads
An instant's pause, and lives but while she moves.
Its own revolvency upholds the world.
Winds from all quarters agitate the air,
And fit the limpid element for use,
Else noxious: oceans, rivers, lakes, and streams,
All feel the fresh'ning impulse, and are cleans'd
By restless undulation: ev'n the oak
Thrives by the rude concussion of the storm:
He seems indeed indignant, and to feel
Th' impression of the blast with proud disdain,
Frowning, as if in his unconscious arm
He held the thunder: but the monarch owes
His firm stability to what he scorns—
More fixt below, the more disturb'd above.

The law, by which all creatures else are bound,
Binds man the lord of all. Himself derives
No mean advantage from a kindred cause,
From strenuous toil his hours of sweetest ease.
The sedentary stretch their lazy length
When custom bids, but no refreshment find,
For none they need: the languid eye, the cheek
Deserted of its bloom, the flaccid, shrunk,
And wither'd muscle, and the vapid soul,
Reproach their owner with that love of rest
To which he forfeits ev'n the rest he loves.
Not such th' alert and active. Measure life
By its true worth, the comforts it affords,
And their's alone seems worthy of the name.
Good health, and, its associate in most,
Good temper; spirits prompt to undertake,
And not soon spent, though in an arduous task;
The pow'rs of fancy and strong thought are their's;
Ev'n age itself seems privileg'd in them,
With clear exemption from its own defects.
A sparkling eye beneath a wrinkled front
The vet'ran shows, and, gracing a gray beard
With youthful smiles, descends toward the grave
Sprightly, and old almost without decay.

EARLY

LOCAL ATTACHMENTS.

BE it a weakness, it deserves some praise;
We love the play-place of our early days—
The scene is touching, and the heart is stone
That feels not at that sight, and feels at none.
The wall on which we tried our graving skill,
The very name we carv'd, subsisting still;
The bench on which we sat while deep employ'd,
Though mangled, hack'd, and hew'd, not yet destroy'd:
The little ones, unbutton'd, glowing hot,
Playing our games, and on the very spot;
As happy as we once, to kneel and draw
The chalky ring, and knuckle down at taw;
To pitch the ball into the grounded hat,
Or drive it devious with a dext'rous pat—
The pleasing spectacle at once excites
Such recollection of our own delights,
That, viewing it, we seem almost t' obtain
Our innocent sweet simple years again.

PRIVATE TUITION

RECOMMENDED.

OH, 'tis a sight to be with joy perus'd,
By all whom sentiment has not abus'd;
New-fangled sentiment, the boasted grace
Of those who never feel in the right place;
A sight surpass'd by none that we can show,
Though Vestris on one leg still shine below;
A father blest with an ingenious son—
Father, and friend, and tutor, all in one.
How!—turn again to tales long since forgot,
Æsop, and Phædrus, and the rest?—Why not?
He will not blush that has a father's heart,
To take in childish plays a childish part;
But bends his sturdy back to any toy
That youth takes pleasure in, to please his boy:
Then why resign into a stranger's hand
A task as much within your own command,

That God and nature, and your int'rest too,
Seem with one voice to delegate to you?
Why hire a lodging in a house unknown,
For one whose tend'rest thoughts all hover round
your own?
This second weaning, needless as it is,
How does it lac'rate both your heart and his!
Th' indented stick, that loses day by day
Notch after notch, till all are smooth'd away,
Bears witness, long ere his dismission come,
With what intense desire he wants his home.
But, though the joys he hopes beneath your roof
Bid fair enough to answer in the proof,
Harmless, and safe, and nat'ral, as they are,
A disappointment waits him even there:
Arriv'd, he feels an unexpected change;
He blushes, hangs his head, is shy and strange,
No longer takes, as once, with fearless ease,
His fav'rite stand between his father's knees,
But seeks the corner of some distant seat,
And eyes the door, and watches a retreat,
And, least familiar where he should be most,
Feels all his happiest privileges lost.

Alas, poor boy!—the natural effect
Of love by absence chill'd into respect.
Say, what accomplishments, at school acquir'd,
Brings he, to sweeten fruits so undesir'd?
Thou well deserv'st an alienated son,
Unless thy conscious heart acknowledge—none;
None that, in thy domestic snug recess,
He had not made his own with more address,
Though some perhaps that shock thy feeling mind,
And better never learn'd, or left behind.
Add too, that, thus estrang'd, thou can'st obtain
By no kind arts his confidence again;
That here begins with most that long complaint
Of filial frankness lost, and love grown faint,
Which, oft neglected in life's waning years,
A parent pours into regardless ears.

Now look on him, whose very voice in tone
Just echoes thine, whose features are thine own,
And stroke his polish'd cheek of purest red,
And lay thine hand upon his flaxen head,
And say—My boy, th' unwelcome hour is come,
When thou, transplanted from thy genial home,

Must find a colder soil and bleaker air,
And trust for safety to a stranger's care;
What character, what turn thou wilt assume
From constant converse with I know not whom;
Who there will court thy friendship, with what views,
And, artless as thou art, whom thou wilt choose;
Though much depends on what thy choice shall be,
Is all chance-medley, and unknown to me.—
Can'st thou, the tear just trembling on thy lids,
And while the dreadful risque foreseen forbids;
Free, too, and under no constraining force,
Unless the sway of custom warp thy course;
Lay such a stake upon the losing side,
Merely to gratify so blind a guide?
Thou can'st not! Nature, pulling at thine heart,
Condemns th' unfatherly, th' imprudent part.

PAIRING TIME ANTICIPATED.

A FABLE.

I SHALL not ask Jean Jacques Rousseau,*
If birds confabulate or no;
'Tis clear that they were always able
To hold discourse, at least, in fable;
And ev'n the child, who knows no better,
Than to interpret by the letter,
A story of a cock and bull,
Must have a most uncommon skull.
It chanc'd then, on a winter's day,
But warm and bright, and calm as May,
The birds, conceiving a design
To forestal sweet St. Valentine,
In many an orchard, copse, and grove,
Assembled on affairs of love,

* It was one of the whimsical speculations of this philosopher, that all fables which ascribe reason and speech to animals should be withheld from children, as being only vehicles of deception. But what child was ever deceived by them, or can be, against the evidence of his senses?

And with much twitter and much chatter,
Began to agitate the matter.
At length a Bulfinch, who could boast
More years and wisdom than the most,
Entreated, op'ning wide his beak,
A moment's liberty to speak;
And, silence publicly enjoin'd,
Deliver'd briefly thus his mind.
My friends! be cautious how ye treat
The subject upon which we meet;
I fear we shall have winter yet.
A Finch, whose tongue knew no control,
With golden wing and satin poll,
A last year's bird, who ne'er had tried
What marriage means, thus pert replied.
Methinks the gentleman, quoth she,
Opposite in the apple-tree,
By his good will, would keep us single
Till yonder heav'n and earth shall mingle,
Or (which is likelier to befall)
Till death exterminate us all.
I marry without more ado,
My dear Dick Redcap, what say you?

Dick heard, and tweedling, ogling, bridling,
Turning short round, strutting and sideling,
Attested, glad, his approbation
Of an immediate conjugation.
Their sentiments so well express'd,
Influenc'd mightily the rest,
All pair'd, and each pair built a nest.
But though the birds were thus in haste,
The leaves came on not quite so fast,
And destiny, that sometimes bears
An aspect stern on man's affairs,
Not altogether smil'd on theirs.
The wind, of late breath'd gently forth,
Now shifted east and east by north.
Bare trees and shrubs but ill, you know,
Could shelter them from rain or snow;
Stepping into their nests, they paddled,
Themselves were chill'd, their eggs were addled;
Soon ev'ry father bird and mother
Grew quarrelsome, and peck'd each other,
Parting without the least regret,
Except that they had ever met,

And learn'd, in future, to be wiser,
Than to neglect a good adviser.

INSTRUCTION.

Misses! the tale that I relate,
This lesson seems to carry—
Choose not alone a proper mate,
But proper time to marry.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

DESCRIPTIVE AND PATHETIC.

PART II.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

PART II.

MUSIC.

HARK! how it floats upon the dewy air!
O what a dying, dying close was there!
'Tis harmony from yon sequester'd bow'r,
Sweet harmony, that sooths the midnight hour!
Long ere the charioteer of day had run
His morning course, th' enchantment was begun;
And he shall gild yon mountain's height again,
Ere yet the pleasing toil becomes a pain.

CARDS.

OH the dear pleasure of the velvet plain,
The painted tablets, dealt and dealt again.
Cards, with what rapture, and the polish'd die,
The yawning chasm of indolence supply!
Then to the dance, and make the sober moon
Witness of joys that shun the sight of noon.
Blame, cynic, if you can, quadrille or ball,
The snug close party, or the splendid hall,
Where night, down-stooping from her ebon throne,
Views constellations brighter than her own.
'Tis innocent, and harmless, and refin'd;
The balm of care, elysium of the mind.
Innocent! Oh, if venerable time
Slain at the foot of pleasure be no crime,
Then, with his silver beard and magic wand,
Let Comus rise archbishop of the land;
Let him your rubric and your feasts prescribe,
Grand metropolitan of all the tribe.

HOPE.

SEE nature, gay as when she first began,
With smiles alluring her admirer man;
She spreads the morning over eastern hills;
Earth glitters with the drops the night distils;
The sun, obedient, at her call appears,
To fling his glories o'er the robe she wears;
Banks cloth'd with flow'rs, groves fill'd with sprightly sounds,
The yellow tilth, green meads, rocks, rising grounds,
Streams edg'd with osiers, fatt'ning ev'ry field
Where'er they flow, now seen and now conceal'd;
From the blue rim where skies and mountains meet,
Down to the very turf beneath thy feet,
Ten thousand charms, that only fools despise,
Or pride can look at with indiff'rent eyes,
All speak one language, all with one sweet voice
Cry to her universal realm, Rejoice!

Hope sets the stamp of vanity on all
That men have deem'd substantial since the fall,
Yet has the wond'rous virtue to educe
From emptiness itself, a real use;
And, while she takes, as at a father's hand,
What health and sober appetite demand,
From fading good derives, with chymic art,
That lasting happiness, a thankful heart.
Hope, with uplifted foot set free from earth,
Pants for the place of her ethereal birth,
On steady wings sails through th' immense abyss,
Plucks amaranthine joys from bow'rs of bliss,
And crowns the soul, while yet a mourner here,
With wreaths like those triumphant spirits wear.

GREENLAND.

OH, blest within th' enclosure of your rocks,
Nor herds have ye to boast, nor bleating flocks;
No fertilizing streams your fields divide,
That show, revers'd, the villas on their side;
No groves have ye; no cheerful sound of bird,
Or voice of turtle, in your land is heard;
Nor grateful eglantine regales the smell
Of those that walk at ev'ning where ye dwell:
But winter, arm'd with terrours here unknown,
Sits absolute on his unshaken throne;
Piles up his stores amidst the frozen waste,
And bids the mountains he has built stand fast;
Beckons the legions of his storms away
From happier scenes, to make your land a prey;
Proclaims the soil a conquest he has won,
And scorns to share it with the distant sun.
—Yet truth is your's, remote, unenvied isle!
And peace, the genuine offspring of her smile;

The pride of letter'd ignorance, that binds
In chains of errour our accomplish'd minds,
That decks, with all the splendour of the true,
A false religion, is unknown to you.
Nature indeed vouchsafes, for our delight,
The sweet vicissitudes of day and night;
Soft airs and genial moisture feed and cheer
Field, fruit, and flow'r, and ev'ry creature here;
But brighter beams, than his who fires the skies,
Have ris'n at length on your admiring eyes,
That shoot into your darkest caves the day,
From which our nicer opticks turn away.

ADDRESS

TO LIBERTY.

OH, could I worship aught beneath the skies
That earth has seen, or fancy can devise,
Thine altar, sacred liberty, should stand,
Built, by no mercenary vulgar hand,
With fragrant turf, and flow'rs as wild and fair
As ever dress'd a bank, or scented summer air!
Duly, as ever on the mountain's height
The peep of morning shed a dawning light,
Again, when ev'ning in her sober vest
Drew the gray curtain of the fading west,
My soul should yield thee willing thanks and praise,
For the chief blessings of my fairest days:
But that were sacrilege—praise is not thine,
But his who gave thee, and preserves thee mine:
Else I would say, and as I spake bid fly
A captive bird into the boundless sky,
This triple realm adores thee—thou art come
From Sparta hither, and art here at home.

EFFECTS

OF LOVE.

THE lover, too, shuns business and alarms,
Tender idolater of absent charms.
Saints offer nothing in their warmest pray'rs,
That he devotes not with a zeal like their's;
'Tis consecration of his heart, soul, time,
And ev'ry thought that wanders, is a crime.
In sighs he worships his supremely fair,
And weeps a sad libation in despair,
Adores a creature, and, devout in vain,
Wins in return an answer of disdain.

VERSES

SUPPOSED TO BE WRITTEN BY ALEX. SELKIRK, DURING HIS SOLITARY ABODE IN THE ISLAND OF JUAN FERNANDEZ.

1.

I AM monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute;
From the centre all round to the sea,
I am lord of the fowl and the brute.
Oh, solitude! where are the charms
That sages have seen in thy face?
Better dwell in the midst of alarms,
Than reign in this horrible place.

2.

I am out of humanity's reach,
I must finish my journey alone,
Never hear the sweet music of speech,
I start at the sound of my own.
The beasts that roam over the plain,
My form with indifference see;
They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.

3.

Society, friendship, and love,
Divinely bestow'd upon man,
Oh, had I the wings of a dove,
How soon would I taste you again!
My sorrows I then might assuage
In the ways of religion and truth,
Might learn from the wisdom of age,
And be cheer'd by the sallies of youth.

4.

Religion! what treasure untold
Resides in that heavenly word!
More precious than silver and gold,
Or all that this earth can afford.
But the sound of the church-going bell
These vallies and rocks never heard,
Ne'er sigh'd at the sound of a knell,
Or smil'd when a sabbath appear'd.

5.

Ye winds, that have made me your sport,
Convey to this desolate shore
Some cordial endearing report
Of a land I shall visit no more.

My friends, do they now and then send
A wish or a thought after me?
O tell me I yet have a friend,
Though a friend I am never to see.

6.

How fleet is a glance of the mind!
Compar'd with the speed of its flight,
The tempest itself lags behind,
And the swift winged arrows of light.
When I think of my own native land,
In a moment I seem to be there;
But alas! recollection at hand
Soon hurries me back to despair.

7.

But the sea-fowl is gone to her nest,
The beast is laid down in his lair,
Ev'n here is a season of rest,
And I to my cabin repair.
There's mercy in every place;
And mercy, encouraging thought!
Gives even affliction a grace,
And reconciles man to his lot.

RURAL WALKS.

THE sofa suits
The gouty limb, 'tis true; but gouty limb,
Though on a sofa, may I never feel:
For I have lov'd the rural walk through lanes
Of grassy swarth, close cropt by nibbling sheep,
And skirted thick with intertexture firm
Of thorny boughs; have lov'd the rural walk
O'er hills, through vallies, and by rivers' brink,
E'er since a truant boy I pass'd my bounds
T' enjoy a ramble on the banks of Thames;
And still remember, nor without regret,
Of hours that sorrow since has much endear'd,
How oft, my slice of pocket store consum'd,
Still hung'ring, pennyless and far from home,
I fed on scarlet hips and stony haws,
Or blushing crabs, or berries, that imboss
The bramble, black as jet, or sloes austere.
Hard fare! but such as boyish appetite

Disdains not; nor the palate, undeprav'd
By culinary arts, unsav'ry deems.
No sofa then awaited my return;
Nor sofa then I needed. Youth repairs
His wasted spirits quickly, by long toil
Incurring short fatigue; and, though our years
As life declines speed rapidly away,
And not a year but pilfers as he goes
Some youthful grace that age would gladly keep;
A tooth or auburn lock, and by degrees
Their length and colour from the locks they spare;
Th' elastic spring of an unwearied foot
That mounts the stile with ease, or leaps the fence,
That play of lungs, inhaling and again
Respiring freely the fresh air, that makes
Swift pace or steep ascent no toil to me,
Mine have not pilfer'd yet; nor yet impair'd
My relish of fair prospect; scenes that sooth'd
Or charm'd me young, no longer young, I find
Still soothing, and of pow'r to charm me still.
And witness, dear companion of my walks,
Whose arm this twentieth winter I perceive
Fast lock'd in mine, with pleasure such as love,
Confirm'd by long experience of thy worth

And well-tried virtues, could alone inspire—
Witness a joy that thou hast doubled long.
Thou know'st my praise of nature most sincere,
And that my raptures are not conjur'd up
To serve occasions of poetic pomp,
But genuine, and art partner of them all.
How oft upon yon eminence our pace
Has slacken'd to a pause, and we have born
The ruffling wind, scarce conscious that it blew,
While admiration, feeding at the eye,
And still unsated, dwelt upon the scene.
Thence with what pleasure have we just discern'd
The distant plough slow moving, and beside
His lab'ring team, that swerv'd not from the track,
The sturdy swain diminish'd to a boy!
Here Ouse, slow winding through a level plain
Of spacious meads with cattle sprinkled o'er,
Conducts the eye along its sinuous course
Delighted. There, fast rooted in their bank,
Stand, never overlook'd, our fav'rite elms,
That screen the herdsman's solitary hut;
While far beyond, and overthwart the stream
That, as with molten glass, inlays the vale,
The sloping land recedes into the clouds;

Displaying on its varied side the grace
Of hedge-row beauties numberless, square tow'r,
Tall spire, from which the sound of cheerful bells
Just undulates upon the list'ning ear;
Groves, heaths, and smoking villages, remote.
Scenes must be beautiful which, daily view'd,
Please daily, and whose novelty survives
Long knowledge and the scrutiny of years.
Praise justly due to those that I describe.

Nor rural sights alone, but rural sounds,
Exhilarate the spirit, and restore
The tone of languid Nature. Mighty winds,
That sweep the skirt of some far-spreading wood
Of ancient growth, make musick not unlike
The dash of ocean on his winding shore,
And lull the spirit while they fill the mind;
Unnumber'd branches waving in the blast,
And all their leaves fast flutt'ring, all at once.
Nor less composure waits upon the roar
Of distant floods, or on the softer voice
Of neighb'ring fountain, or of rills that slip
Through the cleft rock, and, chiming as they fall
Upon loose pebbles, lose themselves at length

In matted grass, that with a livelier green
Betrays the secret of their silent course.

No tree in all the grove but has its charms,
Though each its hue peculiar; paler some,
And of a wannish gray; the willow such,
And poplar, that with silver lines his leaf,
And ash far-stretching his umbrageous arm;
Of deeper green the elm; and deeper still,
Lord of the woods, the long-surviving oak.
Some glossy-leav'd, and shining in the sun,
The maple, and the beech of oily nuts
Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve
Diffusing odours: nor unnoted pass
The sycamore, capricious in attire,
Now green, now tawny, and, ere autumn yet
Have chang'd the woods, in scarlet honours bright.

THE

THRESHER.

THE grove receives us next;
Between the upright shafts of whose tall elms
We may discern the thresher at his task.
Thump after thump resounds the constant flail,
That seems to swing uncertain, and yet falls
Full on the destin'd ear. Wide flies the chaff.
The rustling straw sends up a frequent mist
Of atoms, sparkling in the noon-day beam.
Come hither, ye that press your beds of down,
And sleep not: see him sweating o'er his bread
Before he eats it.—'Tis the primal curse,
But soften'd into mercy; made the pledge
Of cheerful days, and nights without a groan.

GYPSIES.

I SEE a column of slow-rising smoke
O'ertop the lofty wood that skirts the wild.
A vagabond and useless tribe there eat
Their miserable meal. A kettle, slung
Between two poles upon a stick transverse,
Receives the morsel—flesh obscene of dog,
Or vermin, or, at best, of cock purloin'd
From his accustom'd perch. Hard-faring race!
They pick their fuel out of ev'ry hedge,
Which, kindled with dry leaves, just saves unquench'd
The spark of life. The sportive wind blows wide
Their flutt'ring rags, and shows a tawny skin,
The vellum of the pedigree they claim.
Great skill have they in palmistry, and more
To conjure clean away the gold they touch,
Conveying worthless dross into its place;
Loud when they beg, dumb only when they steal.
Strange! that a creature rational, and cast

In human mould, should brutalize by choice
His nature; and, though capable of arts
By which the world might profit, and himself,
Self-banish'd from society, prefer
Such squalid sloth to honourable toil!
Yet even these, though, feigning sickness oft,
They swathe the forehead, drag the limping limb,
And vex their flesh with artificial sores,
Can change their whine into a mirthful note
When safe occasion offers; and, with dance,
And musick of the bladder and the bag,
Beguile their woes, and make the woods resound.
Such health and gaiety of heart enjoy
The houseless rovers of the sylvan world;
And, breathing wholesome air, and wand'ring much,
Need other physick none to heal th' effects
Of loathsome diet, penury, and cold.

DISCIPLINE.

IN colleges and halls, in ancient days,
When learning, virtue, piety, and truth,
Were precious, and inculcated with care,
There dwelt a sage call'd Discipline. His head,
Not yet by time completely silver'd o'er,
Bespoke him past the bounds of freakish youth,
But strong for service still, and unimpair'd.
His eye was meek and gentle, and a smile
Play'd on his lips; and in his speech was heard
Paternal sweetness, dignity, and love.
The occupation dearest to his heart,
Was to encourage goodness. He would stroke
The head of modest and ingenuous worth,
That blush'd at its own praise; and press the youth
Close to his side that pleas'd him. Learning grew,
Beneath his care, a thriving vig'rous plant;
The mind was well inform'd, the passions held
Subordinate, and diligence was choice.
If e'er it chanc'd, as sometimes chance it must,

That one among so many overleap'd
The limits of control, his gentle eye
Grew stern, and darted a severe rebuke:
His frown was full of terror, and his voice
Shook the delinquent with such fits of awe
As left him not, till penitence had won
Lost favour back again, and clos'd the breach.
But Discipline, a faithful servant long,
Declin'd at length into the vale of years:
A palsy struck his arm; his sparkling eye
Was quench'd in rheums of age; his voice, unstrung,
Grew tremulous, and mov'd derision more
Than rev'rence in perverse rebellious youth.
So colleges and halls neglected much
Their good old friend; and Discipline at length,
O'erlook'd and unemploy'd, fell sick and died.

THE

GREEN-HOUSE.

WHO loves a garden loves a green-house too.
Unconscious of a less propitious clime,
There blooms exotic beauty, warm and snug,
While the winds whistle and the snows descend.
The spiry myrtle with unwith'ring leaf
Shines there, and flourishes. The golden boast
Of Portugal and western India there,
The ruddier orange, and the paler lime,
Peep through their polish'd foliage at the storm,
And seem to smile at what they need not fear.
Th' amomum there with intermingling flow'rs
And cherries hangs her twigs. Geranium boasts
Her crimson honours, and the spangled beau,
Ficoides, glitters bright the winter long.
All plants, of ev'ry leaf, that can endure
The winter's frown, if screen'd from his shrewd bite,
Live there, and prosper. Those Ausonia claims,

Levantine regions these; th' Azores send
Their jessamine, her jessamine remote
Caffraia: foreigners from many lands,
They form one social shade, as if conven'd
By magic summons of th' Orphean lyre.
Yet just arrangement, rarely brought to pass
But by a master's hand, disposing well
The gay diversities of leaf and flow'r,
Must lend its aid t' illustrate all their charms,
And dress the regular yet various scene.
Plant behind plant aspiring, in the van
The dwarfish, in the rear retir'd, but still
Sublime above the rest, the statelier stand.
So once were rang'd the sons of ancient Rome,
A noble show! while Roscius trod the stage;
And so, while Garrick, as renown'd as he,
The sons of Albion; fearing each to lose
Some note of Nature's musick from his lips,
And covetous of Shakespeare's beauty, seen
In ev'ry flash of his far-beaming eye.
Nor taste alone and well-contriv'd display
Suffice to give the marshall'd ranks the grace
Of their complete effect. Much yet remains
Unsung, and many cares are yet behind,

And more laborious; cares on which depend
Their vigour, injur'd soon, not soon restor'd.
The soil must be renew'd, which, often wash'd,
Loses its treasure of salubrious salts,
And disappoints the roots; the slender roots
Close interwoven, where they meet the vase,
Must smooth be shorn away; the sapless branch
Must fly before the knife; the wither'd leaf
Must be detach'd, and where it strews the floor,
Swept with a woman's neatness, breeding else
Contagion, and disseminating death.
Discharge but these kind offices, (and who
Would spare, that loves them, offices like these?)
Well they reward the toil. The sight is pleas'd,
The scent regal'd, each odorif'rous leaf,
Each op'ning blossom, freely breaths abroad
Its gratitude, and thanks him with its sweets.

WINTER EVENING,

IN THE COUNTRY.

HARK! 'tis the twanging horn o'er yonder bridge,
That with its wearisome but needful length
Bestrides the wintry flood, in which the moon
Sees her unwrinkled face reflected bright;—
He comes, the herald of a noisy world,
With spatter'd boots, strapp'd waist, and frozen locks;
News from all nations lumb'ring at his back.
True to his charge, the close-pack'd load behind,
Yet careless what he brings, his one concern
Is to conduct it to the destin'd inn;
And, having dropp'd th' expected bag, pass on.
He whistles as he goes, light-hearted wretch,
Cold and yet cheerful: messenger of grief
Perhaps to thousands, and of joy to some;
To him indiff'rent whether grief or joy.
Houses in ashes, and the fall of stocks,

Births, deaths, and marriages, epistles wet
With tears, that trickled down the writer's cheeks
Fast as the periods from his fluent quill,
Or charg'd with am'rous sighs of absent swains,
Or nymphs responsive, equally affect
His horse and him, unconscious of them all.
But oh th' important budget! usher'd in
With such heart-shaking musick, who can say
What are its tidings? have our troops awak'd?
Or do they still, as if with opium drugg'd,
Snore to the murmurs of th' Atlantic wave?
Is India free? and does she wear her plum'd
And jewell'd turban with a smile of peace,
Or do we grind her still? The grand debate,
The popular harangue, the tart reply,
The logick, and the wisdom, and the wit,
And the loud laugh—I long to know them all;
I burn to set th' imprison'd wranglers free,
And give them voice and utt'rance once again.

Now stir the fire, and close the shutters fast,
Let fall the curtains, wheel the sofa round,
And, while the bubbling and loud-hissing urn
Throws up a steamy column, and the cups,

That cheer but not inebriate, wait on each,
So let us welcome peaceful ev'ning in.
Not such is ev'ning, who with shining face
Sweats in the crowded theatre, and, squeez'd
And bor'd with elbow-points through both his sides,
Out-scolds the ranting actor on the stage:
Nor his, who patient stands till his feet throb,
And his head thumps, to feed upon the breath
Of patriots, bursting with heroick rage,
Or placemen, all tranquillity and smiles.
This folio of four pages, happy work!
Which not even criticks criticise; that holds
Inquisitive attention, while I read,
Fast bound in chains of silence, which the fair,
Though eloquent themselves, yet fear to break;
What is it, but a map of busy life,
Its fluctuations, and its vast concerns?
Here runs the mountainous and craggy ridge
That tempts ambition. On the summit see
The seals of office glitter in his eyes;
He climbs, he pants, he grasps them! At his heels,
Close at his heels, a demagogue ascends,

And with a dext'rous jerk soon twists him down,
And wins them, but to lose them in his turn.
Here rills of oily eloquence in soft
Meanders lubricate the course they take;
The modest speaker is asham'd and griev'd
T' engross a moment's notice, and yet begs,
Begs a propitious ear for his poor thoughts,
However trivial all that he conceives.
Sweet bashfulness! it claims at least this praise;
The dearth of information and good sense
That it foretells us, always comes to pass.
Cat'racts of declamation thunder here;
There forests of no meaning spread the page,
In which all comprehension wanders lost;
While fields of pleasantry amuse us there
With merry descants on a nation's woes.
The rest appears a wilderness of strange
But gay confusion; roses for the cheeks,
And lilies for the brows of faded age,
Teeth for the toothless, ringlets for the bald,
Heav'n, earth, and ocean, plunder'd of their sweets,
Nectareous essences, Olympian dews,
Sermons, and city feasts, and fav'rite airs,

Ætherial journies, submarine exploits,
And Katterfelto, with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread.

'Tis pleasant through the loop-holes of retreat
To peep at such a world; to see the stir
Of the great Babel, and not feel the crowd;
To hear the roar she sends through all her gates
At a safe distance, where the dying sound
Falls a soft murmur on th' uninjur'd ear.
Thus sitting, and surveying thus at ease
The globe and its concerns, I seem advanc'd
To some secure and more than mortal height,
That lib'rates and exempts me from them all.
It turns submitted to my view, turns round
With all its generations; I behold
The tumult, and am still. The sound of war
Has lost its terrors ere it reaches me;
Grieves, but alarms me not. I mourn the pride
And av'rice that make man a wolf to man;
Hear the faint echo of those brazen throats
By which he speaks the language of his heart,
And sigh, but never tremble at the sound.

He travels and expatiates, as the bee
From flow'r to flow'r, so he from land to land;
The manners, customs, policy of all,
Pay contribution to the store he gleans;
He sucks intelligence in ev'ry clime,
And spreads the honey of his deep research
At his return—a rich repast for me.
He travels, and I too. I tread his deck,
Ascend his topmast, through his peering eyes
Discover countries, with a kindred heart
Suffer his woes, and share in his escapes;
While fancy, like the finger of a clock,
Runs the great circuit, and is still at home.

Oh winter, ruler of th' inverted year,
Thy scatter'd hair with sleet like ashes fill'd,
Thy breath congeal'd upon thy lips, thy cheeks
Fring'd with a beard made white with other snows
Than those of age, thy forehead wrapt in clouds,
A leafless branch thy sceptre, and thy throne
A sliding car, indebted to no wheels,
But urg'd by storms along its slipp'ry way,
I love thee, all unlovely as thou seem'st,

And dreaded as thou art! Thou hold'st the sun
A pris'ner in the yet undawning east,
Short'ning his journey between morn and noon,
And hurrying him, impatient of his stay,
Down to the rosy west; but kindly still
Compensating his loss with added hours
Of social converse and instructive ease,
And gath'ring, at short notice, in one group,
The family dispers'd, and fixing thought,
Not less dispers'd by day-light and its cares.
I crown thee king of intimate delights,
Fire-side enjoyments, home-born happiness,
And all the comforts that the lowly roof
Of undisturb'd retirement, and the hours
Of long uninterrupted ev'ning, know.

INVOCATION

TO EVENING.

COME, Ev'ning, once again, season of peace;
Return, sweet Ev'ning, and continue long!
Methinks I see thee in the streaky west,
With matron-step slow-moving, while the night
Treads on thy sweeping train; one hand employ'd
In letting fall the curtain of repose
On bird and beast, the other charg'd for man
With sweet oblivion of the cares of day:
Not sumptuously adorn'd, nor needing aid,
Like homely featur'd night, of clust'ring gems;
A star or two, just twinkling on thy brow,
Suffices thee; save that the moon is thine
No less than her's, not worn indeed on high
With ostentatious pageantry, but set
With modest grandeur in thy purple zone,
Resplendent less, but of an ampler round.
Come then, and thou shalt find thy vot'ry calm,
Or make me so. Composure is thy gift:
And, whether I devote thy gentle hours

To books, to musick, or the poet's toil;
To weaving nets for bird-alluring fruit;
Or twining silken threads round iv'ry reels,
When they command whom man was born to plea:
I slight thee not, but make thee welcome still.

Just when our drawing-rooms begin to blaze
With lights, by clear reflection multiplied
From many a mirror, in which he of Gath,
Goliath, might have seen his giant bulk
Whole without stooping, tow'ring crest and all,
My pleasures, too, begin. But me, perhaps,
The glowing hearth may satisfy awhile
With faint illumination, that uplifts
The shadow to the ceiling, there by fits
Dancing uncouthly to the quiv'ring flame.
Not undelightful is an hour to me
So spent in parlour twilight: such a gloom
Suits well the thoughtful or unthinking mind,
The mind contemplative, with some new theme
Pregnant, or indispos'd alike to all.
Laugh ye, who boast your more mercurial pow'rs,
That never feel a stupor, know no pause,
Nor need one; I am conscious, and confess,
Fearless, a soul that does not always think.

Me oft has fancy, ludicrous and wild,
Sooth'd with a waking dream of houses, tow'rs,
Trees, churches, and strange visages, express'd
In the red cinders, while with poring eye
I gaz'd, myself creating what I saw.
Nor less amus'd have I quiescent watch'd
The sooty films that play upon the bars,
Pendulous, and foreboding, in the view
Of superstition, prophesying still,
Though still deceiv'd, some stranger's near approach.
'Tis thus the understanding takes repose
In indolent vacuity of thought,
And sleeps and is refresh'd. Meanwhile the face
Conceals the mood lethargic with a mask
Of deep deliberation, as the man
Were task'd to his full strength, absorb'd and lost.
Thus oft, reclin'd at ease, I lose an hour
At ev'ning, till at length the freezing blast,
That sweeps the bolted shutter, summons home
The recollected pow'rs; and snapping short
The glassy threads, with which the fancy weaves
Her brittle toys, restores me to myself.
How calm is my recess; and how the frost,
Raging abroad, and the rough wind, endear
The silence and the warmth enjoy'd within!

THE

COUNTRY ROBBER.

NOW goes the nightly thief prowling abroad
For plunder, much solicitous how best
He may compensate for a day of sloth
By works of darkness and nocturnal wrong.
Woe to the gard'ner's pale, the farmer's hedge,
Plash'd neatly, and secur'd with driven stakes
Deep in the loamy bank. Uptorn by strength,
Resistless in so bad a cause, but lame
To better deeds, he bundles up the spoil—
An ass's burden—and, when laden most
And heaviest, light of foot, steals fast away.
Nor does the boarded hovel better guard
The well-stack'd pile of riven logs and roots
From his pernicious force. Nor will he leave
Unwrench'd the door, however well secur'd,
Where Chanticleer, amidst his haram, sleeps
In unsuspecting pomp. Twitch'd from the perch,
He gives the princely bird, with all his wives,

To his voracious bag, struggling in vain,
And loudly wond'ring at the sudden change.

Time was when, in the pastoral retreat,
Th' unguarded door was safe; men did not watch
T' invade another's right, or guard their own.
Then sleep was undisturb'd by fear, unscar'd
By drunken howlings; and the chilling tale
Of midnight murder was a wonder heard
With doubtful credit, told to frighten babes.
But farewell now to unsuspicious nights,
And slumbers unalarm'd! Now, ere you sleep,
See that your polish'd arms be prim'd with care,
And drop the night-bolt;—ruffians are abroad;
And the first larum of the cock's shrill throat
May prove a trumpet, summoning your ear
To horrid sounds of hostile feet within.
Ev'n day-light has its dangers; and the walk
Through pathless wastes and woods, unconscious once
Of other tenants than melodious birds,
Or harmless flocks, is hazardous and bold.

VILLAGE ALE-HOUSES DECRIED.

PASS where we may, through city or through town,
Village, or hamlet, of this merry land,
Though lean and beggar'd, ev'ry twentieth pace
Conducts th' unguarded nose to such a whiff
Of stale debauch, forth-issuing from the styes
That law has licens'd, as makes temp'rance reel.
There sit, involv'd and lost in curling clouds
Of Indian fume, and guzzling deep, the boor,
The lackey, and the groom: the craftsman there
Takes a Lethean leave of all his toils;
Smith, cobbler, joiner, he that plies the shears,
And he that kneads the dough; all loud alike,
All learned, and all drunk! The fiddle screams
Plaintive and piteous, as it wept and wail'd
Its wasted tones and harmony unheard:
Fierce the dispute, whate'er the theme; while she,
Fell Discord, arbitress of such debate,

Perch'd on the sign-post, holds with even hand
Her undecisive scales. In this she lays
Her weight of ignorance; in that, of pride;
And smiles, delighted with th' eternal poise.
Dire is the frequent curse, and its twin sound
The cheek-distending oath, not to be prais'd
As ornamental, musical, polite;
Like those which modern senators employ,
Whose oath is rhet'ric, and who swear for fame!
Behold the schools in which plebian minds,
Once simple, are initiated in arts,
Which some may practise with politer grace,
But none with readier skill!—'tis here they learn
The road that leads, from competence and peace,
To indigence and rapine; till at last
Society, grown weary of the load,
Shakes her oncumber'd lap, and casts them out.

SOLDIERSHIP.

BUT faster far, and more than all the rest,
A noble cause, which none who bears a spark
Of public virtue ever wish'd remov'd,
Works the deplor'd and mischievous effect.
'Tis universal soldiership has stabb'd
The heart of merit in the meaner class.
Arms, through the vanity and brainless rage
Of those that bear them, in whatever cause,
Seem most at variance with all moral good,
And incompatible with serious thought.
The clown, the child of nature, without guile,
Blest with an infant's ignorance of all
But his own simple pleasures; now and then
A wrestling match, a foot-race, or a fair;
Is ballotted, and trembles at the news:
Sheepish he doffs his hat, and, mumbling, swears
A bible-oath to be whate'er they please,
To do he knows not what! The task perform'd,
That instant he becomes the serjeant's care,
His pupil, and his torment, and his jest.
His awkward gait, his introverted toes,

Bent knees, round shoulders, and dejected looks,
Procure him many a curse. By slow degrees,
Unapt to learn, and form'd of stubborn stuff,
He yet by slow degrees puts off himself,
Grows conscious of a change, and likes it well:
He stands erect; his slouch becomes a walk;
He steps right onward, martial in his air,
His form, and movement; is as smart above
As meal and larded locks can make him: wears
His hat, or his plum'd helmet, with a grace;
And, his three years of heroship expir'd,
Returns indignant to the slighted plough.
He hates the field, in which no fife or drum
Attends him; drives his cattle to a march;
And sighs for the smart comrades he has left.
'Twere well if his exterior change were all—
But with his clumsy port the wretch has lost
His ignorance and harmless manners too!
To swear, to game, to drink; to show at home,
By lewdness, idleness, and sabbath-breach,
The great proficiency he made abroad;
T' astonish and to grieve his gazing friends;
To break some maiden's and his mother's heart;
To be a pest where he was useful once;
Are his sole aim, and all his glory, now!

THE

LOVE OF NATURE

NOT TO BE ERADICATED.

THE love of Nature's works
Is an ingredient in the compound man,
Infus'd at the creation of the kind.
And, though th' Almighty Maker has throughout
Discriminated each from each, by strokes
And touches of his hand, with so much art
Diversified, that two were never found
Twins at all points—yet this obtains in all,
That all discern a beauty in his works,
And all can taste them: minds that have been
form'd
And tutor'd, with a relish more exact,
But none without some relish, none unmov'd.
It is a flame that dies not even there,
Where nothing feeds it: neither business, crowds,
Nor habits of luxurious city-life;

Whatever else they smother of true worth
In human bosoms; quench it, or abate.
The villas with which London stands begirt,
Like a swarth Indian with his belt of beads,
Prove it. A breath of unadult'rate air,
The glimpse of a green pasture, how they cheer
The citizen, and brace his languid frame!
Ev'n in the stifling bosom of the town,
A garden, in which nothing thrives, has charms
That soothe the rich possessor; much consol'd,
That here and there some sprigs of mournful mint,
Of nightshade, or valerian, grace the well
He cultivates. These serve him with a hint
That Nature lives; that sight-refreshing green
Is still the liv'ry she delights to wear,
Though sickly samples of the exub'rant whole.
What are the casements lin'd with creeping herbs,
The prouder sashes fronted with a range
Of orange, myrtle, or the fragrant weed,
The Frenchman's* darling? are they not all proofs
That man, immur'd in cities, still retains
His inborn inextinguishable thirst
Of rural scenes, compensating his loss.

* Mignonette.

By supplemental shifts, the best he may?
The most unfurnish'd with the means of life,
And they that never pass their brick-wall bounds
To range the fields and treat their lungs with air,
Yet feel the burning instinct: over-head

Suspend their crazy boxes, planted thick,
And water'd duly. There the pitcher stands
A fragment, and the spoutless tea-pot there;
Sad witnesses how close-pent man regrets
The country, with what ardour he contrives
A peep at nature, when he can no more.

A WINTER'S MORNING,

IN THE COUNTRY.

'TIS morning; and the sun, with ruddy orb
Ascending, fires th' horizon; while the clouds,
That crowd away before the driving wind,
More ardent as the disk emerges more,
Resemble most some city in a blaze,
Seen through the leafless wood. His slanting ray
Slides ineffectual down the snowy vale,
And, tinging all with his own rosy hue,
From ev'ry herb and ev'ry spiry blade
Stretches a length of shadow o'er the field.
Mine, spindling into longitude immense,
In spite of gravity, and sage remark
That I myself am but a fleeting shade,
Provokes me to a smile. With eye askance
I view the muscular proportion'd limb
Transform'd to a lean shank. The shapeless pair,
As they design'd to mock me, at my side
Take step for step; and, as I near approach

The cottage, walk along the plaster'd wall,
Prepost'rous sight! the legs without the man.
The verdure of the plain lies buried deep
Beneath the dazzling deluge; and the bents,
And coarser grass, upspearing o'er the rest,
Of late unsightly and unseen, now shine
Conspicuous, and, in bright apparel clad
And fledg'd with icy feathers, nod superb.
The cattle mourn in corners where the fence
Screens them, and seem half petrified to sleep
In unrecumbent sadness. There they wait
Their wonted fodder; not like hung'ring man,
Fretful if unsupplied; but silent, meek,
And patient of the slow-pac'd swain's delay.

THE

WOODMAN.

FORTH goes the woodman, leaving unconcern'd
The cheerful haunts of man; to wield the axe
And drive the wedge, in yonder forest drear,
From morn to eve his solitary task.
Shaggy, and lean, and shrewd, with pointed ears
And tail cropp'd short, half lurcher and half cur—
His dog attends him. Close behind his heel
Now creeps he slow; and now, with many a frisk
Wide-scamp'ring, snatches up the drifted snow
With iv'ry teeth, or ploughs it with his snout;
Then shakes his powder'd coat, and barks for joy.
Heedless of all his pranks, the sturdy churl
Moves right toward the mark; nor stops for aught,
But now and then with pressure of his thumb
T' adjust the fragrant charge of a small tube
That fumes beneath his nose: the trailing cloud
Streams far behind him, scenting all the air.

VILLAGE BELLS.

HOW soft the musick of those village bells,
Falling at intervals upon the ear
In cadence sweet, now dying all away,
Now pealing loud again, and louder still,
Clear and sonorous, as the gale comes on!
With easy force it opens all the cells
Where mem'ry slept. Wherever I have heard
A kindred melody, the scene recurs,
And with it all its pleasures and its pains.
Such comprehensive views the spirit takes,
That in a few short moments I retrace
(As in a map the voyager his course)
The windings of my way through many years.

PROSPECT OF SPRING.

BUT let the months go round, a few short months,
And all shall be restor'd. These naked shoots,
Barren as lances, among which the wind
Makes wintry musick, sighing as it goes,
Shall put their graceful foliage on again,
And, more aspiring, and with ampler spread,
Shall boast new charms, and more than they have lost.
Then, each in its peculiar honours clad,
Shall publish, even to the distant eye,
Its family and tribe. Laburnum, rich
In streaming gold; syringa, iv'ry pure;
The scentless and the scented rose; this red
And of an humbler growth, the *other tall,
And throwing up into the darkest gloom
Of neighb'ring cypress, or more sable yew,
Her silver globes, light as the foamy surf
That the wind severs from the broken wave;

*The Guelder-rose.

The lilac, various in array, now white,
Now sanguine, and her beauteous head now set
With purple spikes pyramidal, as if,
Studious of ornament, yet unresolv'd
Which hue she most approv'd, she chose them all;
Copious of flow'rs the woodbine, pale and wan,
But well compensating her sickly looks
With never-cloying odours, early and late;
Hypericum, all bloom, so thick a swarm
Of flow'rs, like flies clothing her slender rods,
That scarce a leaf appears; mezerion, too,
Though leafless, well attir'd, and thick beset
With blushing wreaths, investing ev'ry spray;
Althæa with the purple eye; the broom,
Yellow and bright, as bullion unalloy'd,
Her blossoms; and, luxuriant above all,
The jasmine, throwing wide her elegant sweets,
The deep dark green of whose unvarnish'd leaf
Makes more conspicuous, and illumines more
The bright profusion of her scatter'd stars.—
These have been, and these shall be in their day;
And all this uniform, uncolour'd scene,
Shall be dismantled of its fleecy load,
And flush into variety again.

From dearth to plenty, and from death to life,
Is Nature's progress, when she lectures man
In heav'nly truth; evincing, as she makes
The grand transition, that there lives and works
A soul in all things, and that soul is God.
The beauties of the wilderness are his,
That makes so gay the solitary place
Where no eye sees them. And the fairer forms
That cultivation glories in, are his.
He sets the bright procession on its way,
And marshals all the order of the year;
He marks the bounds which winter may not pass,
And blunts his pointed fury; in its case,
Russet and rude, folds up the tender germ,
Uninjur'd, with inimitable art;
And, ere one flow'ry season fades and dies,
Designs the blooming wonders of the next.

SICKNESS.

LOOK where he comes—in this embow'r'd alcove
Stand close conceal'd, and see a statue move:
Lips busy, and eyes fixt, foot falling slow,
Arms hanging idly down, hands clasp'd below,
Interpret to the marking eye distress,
Such as its symptoms can alone express.
That tongue is silent now; that silent tongue
Could argue once, could jest or join the song,
Could give advice, could censure or commend,
Or charm the sorrows of a drooping friend,
Renounc'd alike its office and its sport,
Its brisker and its graver strains fall short;
Both fail beneath a fever's secret sway,
And, like a summer-brook, are past away.
This is a sight for pity to peruse,
Till she resemble faintly what she views,
Till sympathy contract a kindred pain,
Pierc'd with the woes that she laments in vain.

This, of all maladies that man infest,
Claims most compassion, and receives the least:
Job felt it when he groan'd beneath the rod
And the barb'd arrows of a frowning God;
And such emollients as his friends could spare,
Friends such as his for modern Jobs prepare.
Blest, rather curst, with hearts that never feel,
Kept snug in caskets of close-hammer'd steel,
With mouths made only to grin wide and eat,
And minds that deem derided pain a treat,
With limbs of British oak, and nerves of wire,
And wit that puppet-prompters might inspire,
Their sov'reign nostrum is a clumsy joke,
On pangs enforc'd with God's severest stroke.
But, with a soul that ever felt the sting
Of sorrow, sorrow is a sacred thing:
Not to molest, or irritate, or raise
A laugh at his expence, is slender praise;
He that has not usurp'd the name of man
Does all, and deems too little all, he can,
T' assuage the throbbings of the fester'd part,
And staunch the bleedings of a broken heart.
'Tis not, as heads that never ache suppose,
Forg'ry of fancy, and a dream of woes;

Man is an harp whose chords elude the sight,
Each yielding harmony dispos'd aright;
The screws revers'd (a task which if he please
God in a moment executes with ease,)
Ten thousand thousand strings at once go loose,
Lost, till he tune them, all their power and use.
Then neither heathy wilds, nor scenes as fair
As ever recompens'd the peasant's care,
Nor soft declivities with tufted hills,
Nor view of waters turning busy mills,
Parks in which art preceptress nature weds,
Nor gardens interspers'd with flow'ry beds,
Nor gales that catch the scent of blooming groves,
And waft it to the mourner as he roves,
Can call up life into his faded eye,
That passes all he sees unheeded by:
No wounds like those a wounded spirit feels,
No cure for such, till God who makes them, heals.
And thou, sad suff'rer under nameless ill,
That yields not to the touch of human skill,
Improve the kind occasion, understand
A father's frown, and kiss his chast'ning hand:
To thee the day-spring, and the blaze of noon,
The purple ev'ning and resplendent moon,

The stars that sprinkled o'er the vault of night,
Seem drops descending in a show'r of light,
Shine not, or undesir'd and hated shine,
Seen through the medium of a cloud like thine.
Yet seek him, in his favour life is found,
All bliss beside—a shadow or a sound:
Then heav'n, eclips'd so long, and this dull earth,
Shall seem to start into a second birth;
Nature, assuming a more lovely face,
Borrowing a beauty from the works of grace,
Shall be despis'd and overlook'd no more,
Shall fill thee with delights unfelt before,
Impart to things inanimate a voice,
And bid her mountains and her hills rejoice;
The sound shall run along the winding vales,
And thou enjoy an Eden ere it fails.

ODE

TO PEACE.

1.

COME, peace of mind, delightful guest,
Return and make thy downy nest
Once more in this sad heart!
Nor riches I, nor pow'r, pursue,
Nor hold forbidden joys in view;
We therefore need not part.

2.

Where wilt thou dwell, if not with me,
From av'rice and ambition free,
And pleasure's fatal wiles?
For whom, alas! dost thou prepare
The sweets that I was wont to share,
The banquet of thy smiles?

3.

The great, the gay, shall they partake
The heav'n that thou alone canst make?
And wilt thou quit the stream
That murmurs through the dewy mead,
The grove and the sequester'd shed,
To be a guest with them?

4.

For thee I panted, thee I priz'd,
For thee I gladly sacrific'd
Whate'er I lov'd before;
And shall I see thee start away,
And, helpless, hopeless, hear thee say—
Farewell! we meet no more?

THE

SHRUBBERY.

WRITTEN IN A TIME OF AFFLICTION.

1.

OH, happy shades—to me unblest!
Friendly to peace, but not to me!
How ill the scene that offers rest,
And heart that cannot rest, agree!

2.

This glassy stream, that spreading pine,
Those alders quiv'ring to the breeze,
Might sooth a soul less hurt than mine,
And please, if any thing could please.

3.

But fixt unalterable care
Foregoes not what she feels within,
Shows the same sadness ev'ry where,
And slights the season and the scene.

4.

For all that pleas'd in wood or lawn,
While peace possess'd these silent bow'rs,
Her animating smile withdrawn,
Has lost its beauties and its pow'rs.

5.

The saint or moralist should tread
This moss-grown alley, musing, slow;
They seek, like me, the secret shade,
But not, like me, to nourish woe!

6.

Me fruitful scenes and prospects waste,
Alike admonish not to roam;
These tell me of enjoyments past,
And those of sorrows yet to come.

CRAZY KATE.

THERE often wanders one, whom better days
Saw better clad, in cloak of satin trimm'd
With lace, and hat with splendid ribband bound.
A serving maid was she, and fell in love
With one who left her, went to sea, and died.
Her fancy follow'd him through foaming waves
To distant shores; and she would sit and weep
At what a sailor suffers; fancy, too,
Delusive most where warmest wishes are,
Would oft anticipate his glad return,
And dream of transports she was not to know.
She heard the doleful tidings of his death—
And never smil'd again! and now she roams
The dreary waste; there spends the livelong day,
And there, unless when charity forbids,
The livelong night. A tatter'd apron hides,
Worn as a cloak, and hardly hides, a gown
More tatter'd still; and both but ill conceal

A bosom heav'd with never-ceasing sighs.
She begs an idle pin of all she meets,
And hoards them in her sleeve; but needful food,
Though press'd with hunger oft, or comelier clothes,
Though pinch'd with cold, asks never.—Kate is
craz'd!

OMIA.

GENTLE savage! whom no love of thee
Or thine, but curiosity perhaps,
Or else vain glory, prompted us to draw
Forth from thy native bow'rs, to shew thee here
With what superior skill we can abuse
The gifts of Providence, and squander life.
The dream is past; and thou hast found again
Thy cocoas and bananas, palms and yams,
And homestall thatch'd with leaves. But hast thou found
Their former charms? And, having seen our state,
Our palaces, our ladies, and our pomp
Of equipage, our gardens, and our sports,
And heard our musick; are thy simple friends,
Thy simple fare, and all thy plain delights,
As dear to thee as once? And have thy joys
Lost nothing by comparison with our's?
Rude as thou art, (for we return'd thee rude
And ignorant, except of outward show)
I cannot think thee yet so dull of heart
And spiritless, as never to regret

Sweets tasted here, and left as soon as known.
Methinks I see thee straying on the beach,
And asking of the surge that bathes thy foot,
If ever it has wash'd our distant shore.
I see thee weep, and thine are honest tears,
A patriot's for his country: thou art sad
At thought of her forlorn and abject state,
From which no pow'r of thine can raise her up.
Thus fancy paints thee, and, though apt to err,
Perhaps errs little when she paints thee thus.
She tells me, too, that duly ev'ry morn
Thou climb'st the mountain top, with eager eye
Exploring far and wide the wat'ry waste
For sight of ship from England. Ev'ry speck
Seen in the dim horizon turns thee pale
With conflict of contending hopes and fears.
But comes at last the dull and dusky eve,
And sends thee to thy cabin, well-prepar'd
To dream all night of what the day denied.
Alas! expect it not. We found no bait
To tempt us in thy country. Doing good,
Disinterested good, is not our trade.
We travel far, 'tis true, but not for nought;
And must be brib'd, to compass earth again,
By other hopes and richer fruits than your's.

THE HARE.

ONE shelter'd hare
Has never heard the sanguinary yell
Of cruel man, exulting in her woes.
Innocent partner of my peaceful home,
Whom ten long years' experience of my care
Has made at last familiar; she has lost
Much of her vigilant instinctive dread,
Not needful here, beneath a roof like mine.
Yes—thou may'st eat thy bread, and lick the hand
That feeds thee; thou may'st frolick on the floor
At evening, and at night retire secure
To thy straw couch, and slumber unalarm'd;
For I have gain'd thy confidence, have pledg'd
All that is human in me to protect
Thine unsuspecting gratitude and love.
If I survive thee I will dig thy grave;
And, when I place thee in it, sighing say,
I knew at least one hare that had a friend.

THE

WAGGONER.

ILL fares the trav'ller now, and he that stalks
In pond'rous boots beside his reeking team.
The wain goes heavily, impeded sore
By congregated loads adhering close
To the clogg'd wheels; and in its sluggish pace,
Noiseless, appears a moving hill of snow.
The toiling steeds expand the nostril wide,
While ev'ry breath, by respiration strong
Forc'd downward, is consolidated soon
Upon their jutting chests. He, form'd to bear
The pelting brunt of the tempestuous night,
With half-shut eyes, and pucker'd cheeks, and teeth
Presented bare against the storm, plods on.
One hand secures his hat, save when with both
He brandishes his pliant length of whip,
Resounding oft, and never heard in vain.
Oh happy; and, in my account, denied
That sensibility of pain with which

Refinement is endued, thrice happy thou!
Thy frame, robust and hardy, feels indeed
The piercing cold, but feels it unimpair'd.
The learned finger never need explore
Thy vig'rous pulse; and the unhealthful east,
That breathes the spleen, and searches ev'ry bone
Of the infirm, is wholesome air to thee.
Thy days roll on, exempt from household care;
Thy waggon is thy wife; and the poor beasts,
That drag the dull companion to and fro,
Thine helpless charge, dependent on thy care.
Ah, treat them kindly! rude as thou appear'st,
Yet show that thou hast mercy! which the great,
With needless hurry whirl'd from place to place,
Humane as they would seem, not always show.

ON THE RECEIPT OF

MY MOTHER'S PICTURE

OUT OF NORFOLK.

THE GIFT OF MY COUSIN ANN BODHAM.

OH that those lips had language! Life has pass'd
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smiles I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me;
Voice only fails, else, how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those dear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles time's tyrannick claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
Oh welcome guest, though unexpected, here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.

I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own;
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief—
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream, that thou art she.

My mother! when I learn'd that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hover'd thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unseen, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can weep in bliss—
Ah that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell toll'd on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,
And, turning from my nurs'ry window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown.
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting sound shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens griev'd themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of a quick return.

What ardently I wish'd, I long believ'd,
And, disappointed still, was still deceiv'd;
By disappointment every day beguil'd,
Dupe of *to-morrow* even from a child.
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrows spent,
I learn'd at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplor'd thee, ne'er forgot.

Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nurs'ry floor;
And where the gard'ner Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bawble coach, and wrapt
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet capt,
'Tis now become a history little known,
That once we call'd the past'ral house our own.
Short lived possession! but the record fair,
That mem'ry keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm that has effac'd
A thousand other themes less deeply trac'd.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid;

Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestow'd,
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glow'd:
All this, and, more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughen'd by those cataracts and breaks
That humour interpos'd too often makes;
All this still legible in mem'ry's page,
And still to be so, to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little notic'd here.
Could time, his flight revers'd, restore the hours
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jasmine,
I prick'd them into paper with a pin,
(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Would'st softly speak, and stroke my head and smile)
Could those few pleasant hours again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?

I would not trust my heart—the dear delight
Seems so to be desir'd, perhaps I might.—
But no—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be lov'd, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.

Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast,
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean cross'd)
Shoots into port at some well-haven'd isle,
Where spices breathe and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs, impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reach'd the shore
"Where tempests never beat nor billows roar,"*
And thy lov'd consort on the dang'rous tide
Of life, long since, has anchor'd at thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distress'd—
Me howling winds drive devious, tempest toss'd,
Sails ript, seams op'ning wide, and compass lost,

* Garth.

And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
But oh the thought, that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not that I deduce my birth
From loins enthron'd and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents pass'd into the skies.
And now, farewell—time, unrevok'd, has run
His wonted course, yet what I wish'd is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem t' have liv'd my childhood o'er again;
To have renew'd the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimick shew of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

END OF THE SECOND PART.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

CHARACTERS.

PART III.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

PART III.

THE GLUTTON.

GORGONIUS sits, abdominous and wan,
Like a fat squab upon a Chinese fan:
He snuffs far off th' anticipated joy;
Turtle and ven'son all his thoughts employ;
Prepares for meals as jockies take a sweat,
Oh, nauseous!—an emetic for a whet!
Will Providence o'erlook the wasted good?
Temperance were no virtue if he could.

PETRONIUS.

PETRONIUS! all the muses weep for thee;
But ev'ry tear shall scald thy memory:
The graces, too, while virtue at their shrine
Lay bleeding under that soft hand of thine,
Felt each a mortal stab in her own breast,
Abhorr'd the sacrifice, and curs'd the priest.
Thou polish'd and high-finish'd foe to truth,
Gray-beard corrupter of our list'ning youth,
To purge and skim away the filth of vice,
That, so refin'd, it might the more entice,
Then pour it on the morals of thy son,
To taint *his* heart, was worthy of *thine own!*
Now, while the poison all high life pervades,
Write, if thou can'st, one letter from the shades;
One, and one only, charg'd with deep regret
That thy worst part, thy principles, live yet;
One sad epistle thence may cure mankind
Of the plague spread by bundles left behind.

THE

TRAVELLED COXCOMB.

FROM school to Cam or Isis, and thence home;
And thence, with all convenient speed, to Rome,
With rev'rend tutor, clad in habit lay,
To tease for cash, and quarrel with, all day;
With memorandum-book for ev'ry town,
And ev'ry post, and where the chaise broke down;
His stock, a few French phrases got by heart;
With much to learn, but nothing to impart,
The youth, obedient to his sire's commands,
Sets off a wand'rer into foreign lands.
Surpris'd at all they meet, the gosling pair,
With awkward gate, stretch'd neck, and silly stare,
Discover huge cathedrals, built with stone,
And steeples tow'ring high, much like our own;
But show peculiar light by many a grin
At popish practices observ'd within.

Ere long, some bowing, smirking, smart abbé,
Remarks two loit'rers that have lost their way;
And being always prim with *politesse*
For men of their appearance and address,
With much compassion undertakes the task
To tell them more than they have wit to ask:
Points to inscriptions wheresoe'er they tread,
Such as, when legible, were never read,
But, being canker'd now and half worn out,
Craze antiquarian brains with endless doubt;
Some headless hero, or some Cæsar shows—
Defective only in his Roman nose;
Exhibits elevations, drawings, plans,
Models of Herculanean pots and pans;
And sells them medals, which, if neither rare
Nor ancient, will be so, preserv'd with care.

Strange the recital! from whatever cause
His great improvement and new light he draws,
The squire, once bashful, is shame-fac'd no more,
But teems with pow'rs he never felt before:
Whether increas'd momentum, and the force
With which from clime to clime he sped his course,
(As axles sometimes kindle as they go)
Chaf'd him, and brought dull nature to a glow;

Or whether clearer skies and softer air,
That make Italian flow'rs so sweet and fair,
Fresh'ning his lazy spirits as he ran,
Unfolded genially, and spread the man;
Returning, he proclaims, by many a grace,
By shrugs, and strange contortions of his face,
How much a dunce, that has been sent to roam,
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home.

AN

ANTIQUE PRUDE.

YON ancient prude, whose wither'd features show
She might be young some forty years ago,
Her elbows pinion'd close upon her hips,
Her head erect, her fan upon her lips,
Her eye-brows arch'd, her eyes both gone astray
To watch yon am'rous couple in their play,
With bony and unkerchief'd neck, defies
The rude inclemency of wintry skies,
And sails, with lappet-head and mincing airs,
Duly, at clink of bell, to morning pray'rs.
To thrift and parsimony much inclin'd,
She yet allows herself that boy behind.
The shiv'ring urchin, bending as he goes,
With slip-shod heels, and dew-drop at his nose;
His predecessor's coat advanc'd to wear,
Which future pages yet are doom'd to share;
Carries her bible, tuck'd beneath his arm,
And hides his hands, to keep his fingers warm.

She, half an angel in her own account,
Doubts not hereafter with the saints to mount,
Though not a grace appears, on strictest search,
But that she fasts, and, *item*, goes to church.
Conscious of age, she recollects her youth,
And tells, not always with an eye to truth,
Who spann'd her waist, and who, where'er she came,
Scrawl'd upon glass miss Bridget's lovely name;
Who stole her slipper, fill'd it with tokay,
And drank the little bumper ev'ry day.
Of temper as envenom'd as an asp;
Censorious, and her every word a wasp;
In faithful mem'ry she records the crimes,
Or real, or fictitious, of the times;
Laughs at the reputations she has torn,
And holds them, dangling at arms length, in scorn.
Such are the fruits of sanctimonious pride,
Of malice fed while flesh is mortified:
Take, Madam, the reward of all your pray'rs,
Where hermits and where bramins meet with theirs;
Your portion is with them.—Nay, never frown;
But, if you please, some fathoms lower down.

VOLTAIRE.

THE path to bliss abounds with many a snare;
Learning is one, and wit, however rare.
The Frenchman, first in literary fame,
(Mention him, if you please. Voltaire?—The same.)
With spirit, genius, eloquence, supplied,
Liv'd long, wrote much, laugh'd heartily, and died.
The scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew.
An infidel in health, but what when sick?
Oh—then a text would touch him at the quick.
View him at Paris, in his last career,
Surrounding throngs the demi-god revere,
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
And fum'd with frankincense on ev'ry side,
He begs their flatt'ry with his latest breath;
And, smother'd in't at last, is prais'd to death!
  Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store;
Content, though mean; and cheerful, if not gay;
Shuffling her threads about the live-long day,

Just earns a scanty pittance; and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light:
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit,
Receives no praise; but, though her lot be such,
(Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
And in that charter reads, with sparkling eyes,
Her title to a treasure in the skies.

Oh, happy peasant! Oh, unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, her's the rich reward;
He prais'd, perhaps, for ages yet to come;
She never heard of half a mile from home:
He, lost in errors, his vain heart prefers:
She, safe in the simplicity of her's.

Not many wise, rich, noble, or profound
In science, win one inch of heav'nly ground.
And is it not a mortifying thought
The poor should gain it, and the rich should not?
No—the volupt'aries, who ne'er forget
One pleasure lost, lose heaven without regret;
Regret would rouse them, and give birth to pray'r;
Pray'r would add faith, and faith would fix them
there.

THE

INSIPIDIST.

TO rise at noon, sit slipshod and undress'd,
To read the news, or fiddle, as seems best,
Till half the world comes rattling at his door,
To fill the dull vacuity till four;
And, just when ev'ning turns the blue vault gray,
To spend two hours in dressing for the day;
To make the sun a bauble without use,
Save for the fruits his heav'nly beams produce;
Quite to forget, or deem it worth no thought,
Who bids him shine, or if he shine or not;
Through mere necessity to close his eyes
Just when the larks and when the shepherds rise;
Is such a life, so tediously the same,
So void of all utility or aim,
That poor JONQUIL, with almost ev'ry breath,
Sighs for his exit, vulgarly call'd death:
For he, with all his follies, has a mind
Not yet so blank, or fashionably blind,

But now and then, perhaps, a feeble ray
Of distant wisdom shoots across his way,
By which he reads, that life without a plan,
As useless as the moment it began,
Serves merely as a soil for discontent
To thrive in; an incumbrance, ere half spent.
Oh! weariness beyond what asses feel,
That tread the circuit of the cistern wheel;
A dull rotation, never at a stay,
Yesterday's face twin image of to-day;
While conversation, an exhausted stock,
Grows drowsy as the clicking of a clock.

THE

BLOOD.

ADIEU, Vinosa cries, ere yet he sips
The purple bumper, trembling at his lips,
Adieu to all morality—if grace
Make works a vain ingredient in the case!
The Christian hope is—Waiter, draw the cork—
If I mistake not—Blockhead! with a fork!—
Without good works, whatever some may boast,
Mere folly and delusion—Sir, your toast!
My firm persuasion is, at least sometimes,
That heav'n will weigh man's virtues and his crimes
With nice attention, in a righteous scale,
And save or damn as these or those prevail.
I plant my foot upon this ground of trust,
And silence every fear with—God is just.
But if perchance, on some dull drizzling day,
A thought intrude that says, or seems to say,

If thus th' important cause is to be tried,
Suppose the beam should dip on the wrong side;
I soon recover from these needless frights,
And, God is merciful—sets all to rights.
Thus, between justice, as my prime support,
And mercy, fled to as the last resort,
I glide and steal along with heav'n in view,
And—pardon me—the bottle stands with you.

THE

SENSUALIST.

THERE is prurience in the speech of some,
Wrath stays him, or else God would strike him dumb:
His wise forbearance has their end in view;
They fill their measure, and receive their due.
The heathen law-givers of ancient days,
Names almost worthy of a Christian's praise,
Would drive them forth from the resort of men,
And shut up ev'ry satyr in his den.
Oh, come not ye near innocence and truth,
Ye worms that eat into the bud of youth!
Infectious as impure, your blighting pow'r
Taints in its rudiments the promis'd flow'r;
Its odour perish'd and its charming hue,
Thenceforth 'tis hateful, for it smells of you.
Not ev'n the vigorous and headlong rage
Of adolescence, or a firmer age,

Affords a plea allowable or just
For making speech the pamperer of lust;
But, when the breath of age commits the fault,
'Tis nauseous as the vapour of a vault.
So wither'd stumps disgrace the sylvan scene,
No longer fruitful, and no longer green;
The sapless wood, divested of the bark,
Grows fungous, and takes fire at ev'ry spark.

THE

INCESSANT TALKER.

YE pow'rs who rule the tongue, if such there are,
And make colloquial happiness your care,
Preserve me from the thing I dread and hate—
A duel in the form of a debate.
The clash of arguments and jar of words,
Worse than the mortal brunt of rival swords,
Decide no question with their tedious length,
(For opposition gives opinion strength)
Divert the champions, prodigal of breath,
And put the peaceably-disposed to death.
Oh, thwart me not, Sir Soph, at ev'ry turn,
Nor carp at ev'ry flaw you may discern;
Though syllogisms hang not on my tongue,
I am not surely always in the wrong!
'Tis hard if all is false that I advance—
A fool must now and then be right, by chance.
Not that all freedom of dissent I blame;
No—there I grant the privilege I claim.

A disputable point is no man's ground;
Rove where you please, 'tis common all around.
Discourse may want an animated—No,
To brush the surface and to make it flow;
But still remember, if you mean to please,
To press your point with modesty and ease.
The mark, at which my juster aim I take,
Is contradiction for its own dear sake.
Set your opinion at whatever pitch,
Knots and impediments make something hitch.
Adopt his own, 'tis equally in vain,
Your thread of argument is snapt again;
The wrangler, rather than accord with you,
Will judge himself deceiv'd, and prove it too.
Vociferated logick kills me quite;
A noisy man is always in the right—
I twirl my thumbs, fall back into my chair,
Fix on the wainscot a distressful stare,
And, when I hope his blunders are all out,
Reply discreetly—to be sure—no doubt!

DUBIUS.

DUBIUS is such a scrupulous good man—
Yes—you may catch him tripping if you can.
He would not, with a peremptory tone,
Assert the nose upon his face his own;
With hesitation admirably slow,
He humbly hopes—presumes—it may be so.
His evidence, if he were call'd by law
To swear to some enormity he saw,
For want of prominence and just relief,
Would hang an honest man, and save a thief.
Through constant dread of giving truth offence,
He ties up all his hearers in suspense;
Knows what he knows as if he knew it not,
What he remembers seems to have forgot;
His sole opinion, whatsoe'er befall,
Cent'ring at last in having none at all.

THE

ROMANCER.

OF all ambitions man may entertain,
The worst that can invade a sickly brain,
Is that which angles hourly for surprise,
And baits its hook with prodigies and lies.
Credulous infancy, or age as weak,
Are fittest auditors for such to seek,
Who to please others will themselves disgrace;
Yet please not, but affront you to your face.
A great retailer of this curious ware,
Having unloaded and made many stare,
Can this be true?—an arch observer cries,
Yes, (rather mov'd) I saw it with these eyes!
Sir! I believe it on that ground alone;
I could not, had I seen it with my own.

THE

NOSER.

TH' emphatic speaker dearly loves t' oppose,
In contact inconvenient, nose to nose,
As if the gnomon on his neighbour's phiz,
Touch'd with a magnet, had attracted his.
His whisper'd theme, dilated and at large,
Proves afrer all a wind-gun's airy charge,
An extract of his diary—no more,
A tasteless journal of the day before.
He walk'd abroad, o'ertaken in the rain,
Call'd on a friend, drank tea, stept home again,
Resum'd his purpose, had a world of talk
With one he stumbled on, and lost his walk.
I interrupt him with a sudden bow,
Adieu, dear Sir, lest you should lose it now.

SOLEMN

DULNESS.

THE solemn fop, significant and budge;
A fool with judges, amongst fools a judge.
He says but little, and that little said,
Owes all its weight, like loaded dice, to lead.
His wit invites you by his looks to come,
But when you knock it never is at home:
'Tis like a parcel sent you by the stage,
Some handsome present, as your hopes presage;
'Tis heavy, bulky, and bids fair to prove
An absent friend's fidelity and love,
But when unpack'd your disappointment groans
To find it stuff'd with brickbats, earth, and stones.

THE

WHINER.

SOME men employ their health, an ugly trick,
In making known how oft they have been sick,
And give us, in recitals of disease,
A doctor's trouble, but without the fees;
Relate how many weeks they kept their bed,
How an emetic or cathartic sped;
Nothing is slightly touch'd, much less forgot,
Nose, ears, and eyes, seem present on the spot.
Now the distemper, spite of draught or pill,
Victorious seem'd, and now the doctor's skill;
And now—alas for unforeseen mishaps!
They put on a damp night-cap and relapse;
They thought they must have died they were so bad—
Their peevish hearers almost wish they had.

ENGLISH

FACITURNITY.

THE circle form'd, we sit in silent state,
Like figures drawn upon a dial-plate;
Yes ma'am, and no ma'am, utter'd softly, show
Ev'ry five minutes how the minutes go;
Each individual suffering a constraint,
Poetry may, but colours cannot paint;
And, if in close committee on the sky,
Reports it hot or cold, or wet or dry;
And finds a changing clime an happy source
Of wise reflection and well-tim'd discourse.
We next inquire, but softly and by stealth,
Like conservators of the public health,
Of epidemic throats, if such there are,
And coughs, and rheums, and phthisic, and catarrh.
That theme exhausted, a wide chasm ensues,
Fill'd up at last with interesting news;

Who danc'd with whom, and who are like to wed,
And who is hang'd, and who is brought to bed;
But fear to call a more important cause,
As if 'twere treason against English laws.
The visit paid, with ecstacy we come,
As from a seven years transportation, home,
And there resume an unembarrass'd brow,
Recov'ring what we lost we know not how,
The faculties that seem'd reduc'd to nought,
Expression and the privilege of thought.

Oh I have seen (nor hope perhaps in vain,
Ere life go down, to see such sights again)
A vet'ran warrior in the Christian field,
Who never saw the sword he could not wield;
Grave without dulness, learned without pride,
Exact, yet not precise, though meek, keen-ey'd;
A man that would have foiled, at their own play,
A dozen would-be's of the modern day;
Who, when occasion justified its use,
Had wit as bright as ready to produce,
Could fetch from records of an earlier age,
Or from philosophy's enlighten'd page,
His rich materials, and regale your ear
With strains it was a privilege to hear:

Yet, above all, his luxury supreme,
And his chief glory, was the gospel theme;
There he was copious as old Greece or Rome,
His happy eloquence seem'd there at home,
Ambitious not to shine or to excel,
But to treat justly what he lov'd so well.

END OF THE THIRD PART.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

HUMOROUS, AND FUGITIVE PIECES.

PART IV.

THE

BEAUTIES

OF

COWPER.

PART IV.

THE POET'S ACCOUNT OF HIS OWN TIMES.

THE world and I fortuitously met;
I ow'd a trifle, and have paid the debt;
She did me wrong, I recompens'd the deed,
And, having struck the balance, now proceed.
Perhaps, however, as some years have pass'd,
Since she and I convers'd together last,
And I have liv'd recluse in rural shades,
Which seldom a distinct report pervades,

Great changes and new manners have occurr'd,
And blest reforms that I have never heard,
And she may now be as discreet and wise,
As once absurd in all discerning eyes.
Sobriety, perhaps, may now be found,
Where once intoxication press'd the ground;
The subtle and injurious may be just,
And he grown chaste that was the slave of lust;
Arts once esteem'd may be with shame dismiss'd;
Charity may relax the miser's fist;
The gamester may have cast his cards away,
Forgot to curse, and only kneel to pray.
It has indeed been told me (with what weight,
How credibly, 'tis hard for me to state)
That fables old, that seem'd for ever mute,
Reviv'd, are hast'ning into fresh repute,
And gods and goddesses discarded long,
Like useless lumber, or a stroller's song,
Are bringing into vogue their heathen train,
And Jupiter bids fair to rule again;
That certain feasts are instituted now,
Where Venus hears the lover's tender vow;
That all Olympus through the country roves,
To consecrate our few remaining groves,

And echo learns politely to repeat
The praise of names for ages obsolete;
That having prov'd the weakness, it should seem,
Of revelation's ineffectual beam,
To bring the passions under sober sway,
And give the moral springs their proper play,
They mean to try what may at last be done,
By stout substantial gods of wood and stone,
And whether Roman rites may not produce
The virtues of old Romé for English use.
May such success attend the pious plan,
May Mercury once more embellish man,
Grace him again with long forgotten arts,
Reclaim his taste and brighten up his parts,
Make him athletic as in days of old,
Learn'd at the bar, in the palæstra bold,
Divest the rougher sex of female airs,
And teach the softer not to copy theirs:
The change shall please, nor shall it matter aught
Who works the wonder, if it be but wrought.
'Tis time, however, if the case stands thus,
For us plain folks, and all who side with us,
To build our altar, confident and bold,
And say as stern Elijah said of old—

The strife now stands upon a fair award,
If Isr'el's Lord be God, then serve the Lord:
If he be silent faith is all a whim,
Then Baal is the God, and worship him.

We have run
Through ev'ry change that fancy at the loom,
Exhausted, has had genius to supply;
And, studious of mutation still, discard
A real elegance, a little us'd,
For monstrous novelty and strange disguise.
We sacrifice to dress, till household joys
And comforts cease. Dress drains our cellar dry,
And keeps our larder lean; puts out our fires;
And introduces hunger, frost, and wo,
Where peace and hospitality might reign.
What man that lives, and that knows how to live,
Would fail t' exhibit at the public shows
A form as splendid as the proudest there,
Though appetite raise outcries at the cost?
A man o' th' town dines late, but soon enough,
With reasonable forecast and dispatch,
T' insure a side-box station at half price.
You think, perhaps, so delicate his dress,

His daily fair is delicate. Alas!
He picks clean teeth, and, busy as he seems
With an old tavern quill, is hungry yet!
The rout is folly's circle, which he draws
With magic wand. So potent is the spell,
That none, decoy'd into that fatal ring,
Unless by heaven's peculiar grace, escape.
There we grow early gray, but never wise;
There form connexions, but acquire no friend;
Solicit pleasure, hopeless of success;
Waste youth in occupations only fit
For second childhood, and devote old age
To sports which only childhood could excuse.
There they are happiest who dissemble best
Their weariness; and they the most polite
Who squander time and treasure with a smile,
Though at their own destruction. She, that asks
Her dear five hundred friends, contemns them all,
And hates their coming. They (what can they less?)
Make just reprisals; and, with cringe and shrug,
And bow obsequious, hide their hate of her.
All catch the frenzy, downward from her grace,
Whose flambeaux flash against the morning skies,

And gild our chamber ceilings as they pass,
To her who, frugal only that her thrift
May feel excesses she can ill afford,
Is hackney'd home unlacquey'd; who, in haste
Alighting, turns the key in her own door,
And, at the watchman's lantern borrowing light,
Finds a cold bed her only comfort left.
Wives beggar husbands, husbands starve their wives,
On fortune's velvet altar off'ring up
Their last poor pittance—fortune, most severe
Of goddesses yet known, and costlier far
Than all that held their routs in Juno's heav'n—
So fare we in this prison-house the world.
And 'tis a fearful spectacle to see
So many maniacs dancing in their chains.
They gaze upon the links that hold them fast
With eyes of anguish, execrate their lot,
Then shake them in despair, and dance again!

THE

CITIZEN'S RETREAT.

SUBURBAN villas, highway-side retreats,
That dread the encroachment of our growing streets,
Tight boxes, neatly sash'd, and in a blaze
With all a July sun's collected rays,
Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air.
Oh sweet retirement, who would balk the thought,
That could afford retirement, or could not?
'Tis such an easy walk, so smooth and straight,
The second milestone fronts the garden gate;
A step if fair, and, if a shower approach,
You find safe shelter in the next stage-coach.
There, prison'd in a parlour snug and small,
Like bottled wasps upon a southern wall,
The man of bus'ness and his friends compress'd,
Forget their labours, and yet find no rest;
But still 'tis rural—trees are to be seen
From ev'ry window, and the fields are green;
Ducks paddle in the pond before the door,
And what could a remoter scene show more?

THE

MODERN PATRIOT.

1.

REBELLION is my theme all day;
I only wish 'twould come
(As who knows but perhaps it may?)
A little nearer home.

2.

Yon roaring boys, who rave and fight
On t' other side th' Atlantic,
I always held them in the right,
But most so when most frantic.

3.

When lawless mobs insult the court,
That man shall be my toast,
If breaking windows be the sport,
Who bravely breaks the most.

4.

But oh! for him my fancy culls
The choicest flow'rs she bears,
Who constitutionally pulls
Your house about your ears.

5.

Such civil broils are my delight;
Tho' some folks can't endure 'em,
Who say the mob are mad outright,
And that a rope must cure 'em.

6.

A rope! I wish we patriots had
Such strings for all who need 'em—
What! hang a man for going mad?
Then farewell British freedom.

REPORT

OF AN ADJUDGED CASE, NOT TO BE FOUND IN ANY OF THE BOOKS.

1.

BETWEEN Nose and Eyes a strange contest arose—
The spectacles set them unhappily wrong;
The point in dispute was, as all the world knows,
To which the said spectacles ought to belong.

2.

So Tongue was the lawyer, and argued the cause
With a great deal of skill, and a wig full of learning;
While chief baron Ear set to balance the laws,
So fam'd for his talent in nicely discerning.

3.

In behalf of the Nose, it will quickly appear,
And your lordship, he said, will undoubtedly find,
That the Nose has had spectacles always in wear,
Which amounts to possession time out of mind.

4.

Then holding the spectacles up to the court—
Your lordship observes they are made with a straddle
As wide as the ridge of the Nose is; in short,
Design'd to sit close to it, just like a saddle.

5.

Again, would your lordship a moment suppose
('Tis a case that has happen'd, and may be again)
That the visage or countenance had not a nose!
Pray who wou'd, or who cou'd, wear spectacles then?

6.

On the whole, it appears—and my argument shows,
With a reasoning the court will never condemn,
That the spectacles plainly were made for the Nose,
And the Nose was as plainly intended for them.

7.

Then, shifting his side, (as a lawyer knows how)
He pleaded again in behalf of the Eyes:
But what were his arguments few people know,
For the court did not think they were equally wise.

8.

So his lordship decreed, with a grave solemn tone,
Decisive and clear, without one if or but—
That, whenever the Nose put his spectacles on,
By day-light or candle-light—Eyes should be shut!

ORIGIN

OF THE SOFA.

TIME was, when clothing sumptuous or for use,
Save their own painted skins, our sires had none.
As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth,
Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile:
The hardy chief upon the rugged rock
Wash'd by the sea, or on the grav'ly bank
Thrown up by wintry torrents, roaring loud,
Fearless of wrong, repos'd his weary strength.
Those barb'rous ages past, succeeded next
The birth-day of invention; weak at first,
Dull in design, and clumsy to perform.
Joint-stools were then created; on three legs
Upborn they stood. Three legs upholding firm
A massy slab, in fashion square or round.
On such a stool immortal Alfred sat,
And sway'd the sceptre of his infant realms:
And such in ancient halls and mansions drear
May still be seen; but perforated sore,

And drill'd in holes, the solid oak is found,
By worms voracious eating through and through.

At length a generation more refin'd
Improv'd the simple plan; made three legs four,
Gave them a twisted form vermicular,
And o'er the seat, with plenteous wadding stuff'd,
Induc'd a splendid cover, green and blue,
Yellow and red, of tap'stry richly wrought
And woven close, or needle-work sublime.
There might ye see the piony spread wide,
The full-blown rose, the shepherd and his lass,
Lap-dog and lambkin with black staring eyes,
And parrots with twin cherries in their beak.

Now came the cane from India, smooth and bright
With Nature's varnish; sever'd into stripes
That interlac'd each other, these supplied
Of texture firm a lattice-work, that brac'd
The new machine, and it became a chair.
But restless was the chair; the back erect,
Distress'd the weary loins, that felt no ease;
The slipp'ry seat betray'd the sliding part

That press'd it, and the feet hung dangling down,
Anxious in vain to find the distant floor.
These for the rich: the rest, whom fate had plac'd
In modest mediocrity, content
With base materials, sat on well-tann'd hides,
Obdurate and unyielding, glassy smooth,
With here and there a tuft of crimson yarn,
Or scarlet crewel, in the cushion fixt;
If cushion might be call'd, what harder seem'd,
Than the firm oak of which the frame was form'd.
No want of timber then was felt or fear'd
In Albion's happy isle. The umber stood
Pond'rous and fixt by its own massy weight.
But elbows still were wanting; these, some say,
An alderman of Cripplegate contriv'd;
And some ascribe th' invention to a priest
Burly and big, and studious of his ease.
But, rude at first, and not with easy slope
Receding wide, they press'd against the ribs,
And bruis'd the side; and, elevated high,
Taught the rais'd shoulders to invade the ears.
Long time elaps'd or e'er our rugged sires
Complain'd, though incommodiously pent in,
And ill at ease behind. The ladies first,

'Gan murmur, as became the softer sex.
Ingenious fancy, never better pleas'd
Than when employ'd t' accommodate the fair,
Heard the sweet moan with pity, and devis'd
The soft settee; one elbow at each end,
And in the midst an elbow, it receiv'd,
United yet divided, twain at once.
So sit two kings of Brentford on one throne;
And so two citizens who take the air,
Close pack'd, and smiling, in a chaise and one.
But relaxation of the languid frame,
By soft recumbency of outstretch'd limbs,
Was bliss reserv'd for happier days. So slow
The growth of what is excellent: so hard
T' attain perfection in this nether world.
Thus first necessity invented stools,
Convenience next suggested elbow-chairs,
And luxury th' accomplish'd SOFA last.

The nurse sleeps sweetly, hir'd to watch the sick,*
Whom snoring she disturbs. As sweetly he
Who quits the coach-box at the midnight hour
To sleep within the carriage more secure,

* Paradise Lost, Book iv. 641 to 656.

His legs depending at the open door.
Sweet sleep enjoys the curate in his desk,
The tedious rector drawling o'er his head;
And sweet the clerk below. But neither sleep
Of lazy nurse, who snores the sick man dead,
Nor his who quits the box at midnight hour
To slumber in the carriage more secure,
Nor sleep enjoy'd by curate in his desk,
Nor yet the dozings of the clerk, are sweet,
Compar'd with the repose the SOFA yields.

THE

MAN OF THE PEOPLE.

MAN praises man. The rabble, all alive,
From tippling-benches, cellars, stalls, and styes,
Swarm in the streets. The statesman of the day,
A pompous and slow-moving pageant, comes.
Some shout him, and some hang upon his car,
To gaze in 's eyes, and bless him. Maidens wave
Their 'kerchiefs, and old women weep for joy:
While others, not so satisfied, unhorse
The gilded equipage, and, turning loose
His steeds, usurp a place they well deserve.
Why? what has charm'd them? Hath he sav'd the state?
No. Doth he purpose its salvation? No.

THE

DIVERTING HISTORY

OF

JOHN GILPIN;

SHEWING HOW HE WENT FARTHER THAN HE INTENDED, AND CAME SAFE HOME AGAIN.

JOHN GILPIN was a citizen
Of credit and renown,
A train-band captain eke was he
Of famous London town.

John Gilpin's spouse said to her dear—
Though wedded we have been
These twice ten tedious years, yet we
No holiday have seen.

To-morrow is our wedding-day,
And we will then repair
Unto the Bell at Edmonton
All in a chaise and pair.

My sister, and my sister's child,
Myself, and children three,
Will fill the chaise; so you must ride
On horseback after we.

He soon replied—I do admire
Of womankind but one,
And you are she, my dearest dear,
Therefore it shall be done.

I am a linen-draper bold,
As all the world doth know,
And my good friend the calender
Will lend his horse to go.

Quoth Mrs. Gilpin—That's well said;
And, for that wine is dear,
We will be furnish'd with our own,
Which is both bright and clear.

John Gilpin kiss'd his loving wife;
O'erjoy'd was he to find
That, though on pleasure she was bent,
She had a frugal mind.

The morning came, the chaise was brought,
But yet was not allow'd
To drive up to the door, lest all
Should say that she was proud.

So three doors off the chaise was stay'd,
Where they did all get in;
Six precious souls, and all agog
To dash through thick and thin!

Smack went the whip, round went the wheels,
Were never folk so glad,
The stones did rattle underneath
As if Cheapside were mad.

John Gilpin at his horse's side
Seiz'd fast the flowing mane,
And up he got, in haste to ride,
But soon came down again;

For saddle-tree scarce reach'd had he,
His journey to begin,
When, turning round his head, he saw
Three customers come in.

So down he came; for loss of time,
Although it griev'd him sore,
Yet loss of pence, full well he knew,
Would trouble him much more.

'Twas long before the customers
Were suited to their mind,
When Betty screaming came down stairs—
"The wine is left behind!"

Good lack! quoth he—yet bring it me,
My leathern belt likewise,
In which I bear my trusty sword
When I do exercise.

Now mistress Gilpin (careful soul!)
Had two stone bottles found,
To hold the liquor that she lov'd,
And keep it safe and sound.

Each bottle had a curling ear,
Through which the belt he drew,
And hung a bottle on each side,
To make his balance true.

Then, over all, that he might be
Equipp'd from top to toe,
His long red cloak, well brush'd and neat,
He manfully did throw.

Now see him mounted once again
Upon his nimble steed,
Full slowly, pacing o'er the stones
With caution and good heed!

But, finding soon a smoother road
Beneath his well-shod feet,
The snorting beast began to trot,
Which gall'd him in his seat.

So, fair and softly, John he cried,
But John he cried in vain;
That trot became a gallop soon,
In spite of curb and rein.

So, stooping down, as needs he must
Who cannot sit upright,
He grasp'd the mane with both his hands,
And eke with all his might.

His horse, who never in that sort
Had handled been before,
What thing upon his back had got
Did wonder more and more.

Away went Gilpin, neck or nought;
Away went hat and wig!
He little dreamt, when he set out,
Of running such a rig!

The wind did blow, the cloak did fly,
Like streamer long and gay,
Till, loop and button failing both,
At last it flew away.

Then might all people well discern
The bottles he had slung;
A bottle swinging at each side,
As hath been said or sung.

The dogs did bark, the children scream'd,
Up flew the windows all;
And ev'ry soul cried out—Well done!
As loud as he could bawl.

Away went Gilpin—who but he?
His fame soon spread around—
He carries weight! he rides a race!
'Tis for a thousand pound!

And still, as fast as he drew near,
'Twas wonderful to view
How in a trice the turnpike-men
Their gates wide open threw.

And now, as he went bowing down
His reeking head full low,
The bottles twain behind his back
Were shatter'd at a blow.

Down ran the wine into the road,
Most piteous to be seen,
Which made his horse's flanks to smoke
As they had basted been.

But still he seem'd to carry weight,
With leathern girdle brac'd;
For all might see the bottle-necks
Still dangling at his waist.

Thus all through merry Islington
These gambols he did play,
Until he came unto the Wash
Of Edmonton so gay.

And there he threw the wash about
On both sides of the way,
Just like unto a trundling mop,
Or a wild goose at play.

At Edmonton his loving wife
From the balcony spied
Her tender husband, wond'ring much
To see how he did ride.

Stop, stop, John Gilpin!—Here's the house—
They all at once did cry;
The dinner waits, and we are tir'd:
Said Gilpin—So am I!

But yet his horse was not a whit
Inclin'd to tarry there;
For why?—his owner had a house
Full ten miles off, at Ware.

So like an arrow swift he flew,
Shot by an archer strong;
So did he fly—which brings me to
The middle of my song.

Away went Gilpin, out of breath,
And sore against his will,
Till at his friend the calender's
His horse at last stood still.

The calender, amaz'd to see
His neighbour in such trim,
Laid down his pipe, flew to the gate,
And thus accosted him:—

What news? what news? your tidings tell;
Tell me you must and shall—
Say why bare-headed you are come,
Or why you come at all.

Now Gilpin had a pleasant wit,
And lov'd a timely joke!
And thus unto the calender
In merry guise he spoke:—

I came because your horse would come;
And, if I well forebode,
My hat and wig will soon be here—
They are upon the road.

The calender, right glad to find
His friend in merry pin,
Return'd him not a single word,
But to the house went in;

Whence straight he came with hat and wig;
A wig that flow'd behind,
A hat not much the worse for wear,
Each comely in its kind.

He held them up, and, in his turn,
Thus show'd his ready wit—
My head is twice as big as your's,
They therefore needs must fit.

But let me scrape the dirt away
That hangs upon your face;
And stop and eat, for well you may
Be in a hungry case.

Said John—It is my wedding-day,
And all the world would stare
If wife should dine at Edmonton
And I should dine at Ware!

So, turning to his horse, he said—
I am in haste to dine;
'Twas for your pleasure you came here,
You shall go back for mine.

Ah, luckless speech, and bootless boast!
For which he paid full dear;
For, while he spake, a braying ass
Did sing most loud and clear;

Whereat his horse did snort, as he
Had heard a lion roar,
And gallop'd off with all his might,
As he had done before.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went Gilpin's hat and wig!
He lost them sooner than at first—
For why?—they were too big!

Now, mistress Gilpin, when she saw
Her husband posting down
Into the country far away,
She pull'd out half a crown;

And thus unto the youth she said
That drove them to the Bell—
This shall be your's when you bring back
My husband safe and well.

The youth did ride, and soon did meet
John coming back amain;
Whom in a trice he tried to stop,
By catching at his rein;

But, not performing what he meant,
And gladly would have done,
The frighted steed he frighted more,
And made him faster run.

Away went Gilpin, and away
Went post-boy at his heels!—
The post-boy's horse right glad to miss
The lumb'ring of the wheels.

Six gentlemen upon the road,
Thus seeing Gilpin fly,
With post-boy scamp'ring in the rear,
They rais'd the hue and cry:—

Stop thief! stop thief!—a highwayman!
Not one of them was mute;
And all and each that pass'd that way
Did join in the pursuit.

And now the turnpike gates again
Flew open in short space;
The toll-men thinking, as before,
That Gilpin rode a race.

And so he did—and won it too!—
For he got first to town;
Nor stopp'd till where he had got up
He did again get down.

Now let us sing—Long live the king,
And Gilpin, long live he;
And, when he next doth ride abroad,
May I be there to see!

NOTES.

But hark—the doctor's voice! &c. (p. 18.)

THIS alludes to a celebrated manufacturer of what are called *manuscript sermons*, who, some years since, almost daily proclaimed his fame to the world through the medium of the news-papers.

When, Isaac like, the solitary saint &c. (p. 24.)

And Isaac went out to meditate in the field, at the even-tide
Gen. chap 24, v. 63.

And nature with a dim and sickly eye (p. 56.)

We are informed, by the author, in a note, that this is in "allusion to the fog which covered both Europe and Asia during the whole summer of 1783;" a year which appears to have been rendered memorable by many extraordinary circumstances in the natural world. This day, July 2, 1783, says the Annual Register, was a thunder-storm the most general, throughout England, that has been remembered for

a long time; particularly in Wiltshire and most of the northern counties, where a great number of sheep and black cattle were killed, and other considerable damages incurred. About nine in the evening of August 17, this year, a very singular luminous phenomenon made its appearance at Greenwich, and was seen over great part of Europe: on the 18th of April there was a total and visible eclipse of the Moon, which continued during three hours; another total eclipse of the Moon occurred on the 10th of September, beginning at 38 minutes past 9 o'Clock in the evening and continuing 3 hours 41 minutes, which was visible in Europe, Africa, and great part of Asia and America.

True, we have lost an Empire &c. (p. 61.)

These lines advert, with great spirit, to the dismemberment of America from Great Britain, and undoubtedly point out the true cause of that calamity.

But brighter beams, than his &c. (p. 104.)

The author here alludes to the promulgation of the Gospel, in Greenland, by the Moravian Missionaries.

Gentle savage! whom &c. (p. 159.)

Omia, or Omai, was a native of one of the Friendly Islands, from whence, while extremely young, he was brought over to England by Captain Furneaux. After staying in this country long enough to become acquainted with the habits and luxuries of civilized life, he was embarked with Captain

Cook, who returned him to his native place: he was, however, sent back so loaded with presents as greatly to attract the envy of his countrymen, many of whom, on Captain Cook's return, testified the utmost eagerness to embark with him for England. Omia, on these occasions, always reminded Cook of what Lord Sandwich had declared to him—"that no others of his countrymen were to come to England;" for Omia, notwithstanding the hatred and danger to which it had exposed him, was extremely jealous of his *travelled* superiority over the natives, and could not bear to think that another should acquire the same degree of importance to which he now considered himself entitled.

When Cook finally quitted Omia, he was under the necessity of promising him a periodical return of ships from this country, though no such measure was ever designed to be executed; the promise, notwithstanding, was indispensable, in order to keep Omia in the observance of that conduct which had been enjoined him by the English commander, and at the same time to restrain the natives from attempting any violence against him. Mr. Cowper has made a very beautiful allusion to this circumstance, in the following lines,—

> *She tells me, too, that duly ev'ry morn*
> *Thou climb'st the mountain top, with eager eye*
> *Exploring far and wide the wat'ry waste*
> *For sight of ship from England.*

Those who may be induced to wish a more detailed account of this interesting Savage, will find themselves amply gratified by consulting the two first volumes of the quarto edition of Captain Cook's Last Voyage to the Pacific Ocean.

Petronius! all the muses &c. (p. 174.)

It is hardly necessary to observe, that by Petronius is here meant the *very* celebrated Lord Chesterfield.

Yon ancient Prude &c. (p. 178.)

The poet seems to have taken the hint of his prude from Hogarth. Of the original, we shall give the following account, from Fielding's History of Tom Jones, where, speaking of Miss Bridget Allworthy, he says, "I would attempt to draw her picture; but that is done already by a more able master, Mr. Hogarth himself, to whom she sat many years ago, and hath been lately exhibited by that gentleman in his print of a WINTER'S MORNING, of which she was no improper emblem; and may be seen walking (for walk she does in the print) to Covent-Garden Church, with a starved foot-boy behind carrying her prayer-book."

John Gilpin was a citizen &c. (p. 218.)

It is a fact but little known, that Henderson, the Actor, had the honour of introducing the poetry of Cowper into public reputation and favour. During the Lent of 1785 Mr. Henderson, who was then joined with Mr. Sheridan,* brought forward, among other pieces, in their Readings at Freemason's Hall, the History of John Gilpin; which now, for the first time, attracted universal interest and admiration,

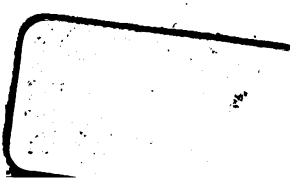
*Father of the present Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq. M. P.

though it had been several years before published in the Newspapers. One printseller immediately sold 6000 Copies of this hitherto neglected *Race*; and its success was so extensive as probably induced the Author to venture his Poems before the public.

Henderson did not long survive the brilliant career of John Gilpin; dying on the 25th of November 1785. He was interred in Westminster Abbey, on the 3rd. of December following, near Johnson and Garrick. His pall was supported by the Hon. Mr. Byng, Mr. Malone, Mr. Whitefoord, Mr. Steevens, Mr. Hoole, and the present Rt. Hon. W. Pitt.

And Katterfelto, with his hair on end
At his own wonders, wond'ring for his bread. (p. 127.)

Katterfelto was celebrated for his puffing advertisements, and a large black cat; with which he contrived to allure a great concourse of people, some years ago, to his exhibitions in Piccadilly. He was always ample in promises, but meagre in performance; and may be said to have been the Merlin or Van Butchell of his day.

THE END.

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